

AUSTRALIA'S SPECIAL ARTS MAGAZINE



AUSTRALASIAN MARTIAL ARTS MAGAZINE

THE STRENGTH IN AIKI

SENSEI **DARREN FRIEND**
ON 30 YEARS IN AIKIDO

JUJUTSU: FROM SAMURAI TO YOU

The roots of the arts
we know today

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With Aussie Special
Forces sergeant
Paul Cale

KRAV MAGA & THE GUNMAN

Behind the scenes of Sean
Penn's action thriller

SECRETS OF WUDANG

Taoist kung fu comes
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Shihan George Barounis on
producing world-beaters

KNEE-RIDE TO VICTORY

BJJ's most versatile
control technique

LIVE-IN KARATE

Inside a
traditional
gasshuku



JULY 2015

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PRACTICAL WING CHUN

Before moving to Australia, Jack Leung trained & competed in Goju-Ryu Karate in Hong Kong for 6 years. He also trained Muay Thai in Thailand and several lineages of Southern Praying Mantis, including Chow Gar & Jook Lum Tong Long. In 1996, He was fortunate enough to meet Grand Master Wan Kam Leung in Hong Kong and started training at the Ving Tsun Association.

Practical Wing Chun is a close range combat & self defense system that does not pit force against force. The same system the Royal Hong Kong Police G4 VIP Protection Unit practice. After 17 years of training and guidance under Grand Master Wan, he was awarded the title of Sifu in 2013. Sifu Leung now serves as Regional Director for Practical Wing Chun (Australia). He is also the founder and Chief Instructor of the Griffith University Practical Wing Chun Club and currently runs 4 branches in Queensland training & teaching 7 days a week like his Sifu Wan Kam Leung. For more info, please visit website.



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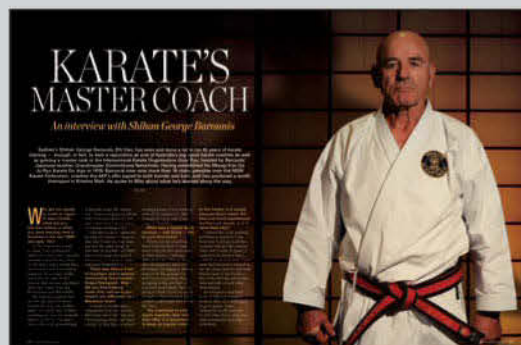
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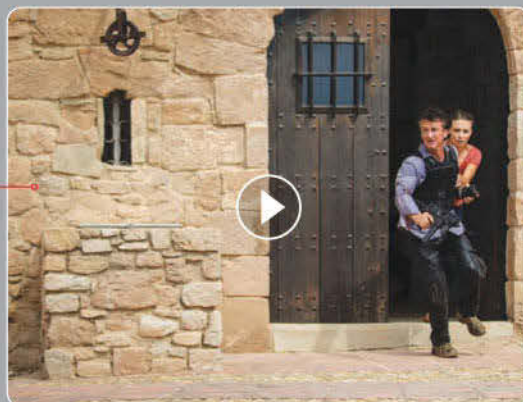


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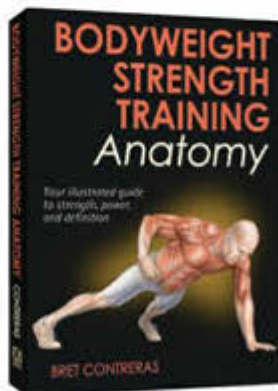
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EDITORIAL WITH SILVIO MORELLI



Prepare for the Worst

People train in martial arts for a many reasons and, whatever they may be, it can give each of us a multitude of benefits. But if self-defence skill is your goal, this must be kept in mind when you hit the mats.

I've mentioned this in many past editorials and I'm sure this won't be the last time, because I feel that we at *Blitz Martial Arts Magazine* have an obligation — almost a duty of care, if you like — to constantly remind the martial arts enthusiasts out there that self-defence training and martial arts are not necessarily the same thing. Some martial arts instructors are intensely focused on providing practical and proven self-defence skills, yet for others it's merely an afterthought as they pursue point-scoring tactics, athleticism or performance goals. And others pretend — or even genuinely believe — they are doing the former while their training is all geared towards the latter.

Some folks out there may feel that *Blitz* doesn't focus enough on their favourite martial sport or style of competition, but there's a reason: for as long as this magazine has been around, our feedback and surveys tell us that the number-one reason people read *Blitz* is for information pertaining to self-defence, and training the body and mind to better execute the techniques and tactics necessary for surviving against real violence.

So, while we do celebrate and learn from the best martial arts athletes and coaches around (see our 'Fight Life' interview with all-time grappling great Roger Gracie on page 82 for just one example), we are most concerned with bringing you articles focused on the self-defence aspects of the martial arts. After all, that is what martial arts were originally created for, and it's what draws most people to start training in the first place. We've been told this, time and time again, by many of you who pick up the magazine each month.

As always, this July issue is in keeping with that theme and is packed with articles covering the practical side of training for self-defence, with strategies and techniques from masters of numerous styles. Even the master coach of Australian sport karate, Shihan George Barounis (page 38), reveals that while a good deal of his focus is on producing great point-fighters such as world champion Kristina Mah, he remains very strict about teaching the self-defence elements of his Goju Ryu karate and ensuring

students don't confuse these with sparring for sport. Like his teacher, Grandmaster Yamamoto, Barounis acknowledges that self-protection techniques are the essence of his art, because long before karate became a sport, it was a reality-based skill set that its Okinawan inventors relied upon to survive brutal violence.

Likewise, Darren Friend in our cover story (page 24) not only delivers some deep insights into the way *budo* — the warrior's way — can shape our lives and build our characters, he demonstrates some of the Yoshinkan's methods to deal with common street attacks.

And John Will in his article on Brazilian jiu-jitsu's most effective ground-control methods (page 66) shows why the technique is not only effective on the mat against fellow grapplers, but on the street against those trying to do you real harm.

Then we get into the real nitty-gritty of surviving street violence with part two of 'Kinetic Fighting', our interview with Sergeant Paul Cale (page 44). Cale applies his years of experience as a commando in front-line combat to the civilian world, and shows how we can all do better in self-defence if we're savvy enough to arm ourselves with not only the right skills, but the necessary mindset.

That's just a selection of what's on offer in this issue of *Blitz*. I hope you enjoy it, and that it gives you at least a little food for thought when it comes to assessing and refining your own training methods to get you closer to your goals. (And if you haven't already, I urge you to download our 'In-Site' app to your smartphone so you don't miss out on the great instructional videos we've put together to accompany the articles in this and every issue.) Happy training!



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David Dangerfield Sensei combines genuine martial and corporate credentials. His martial qualifications include **6th Dan Aikido & Shomokuroku Shinto Muso Ryu** – one of Japan's most respected Koryu systems. He has taught in Japan, Europe, and the Middle East, Malaysia and Indonesia as well as all around Australia.

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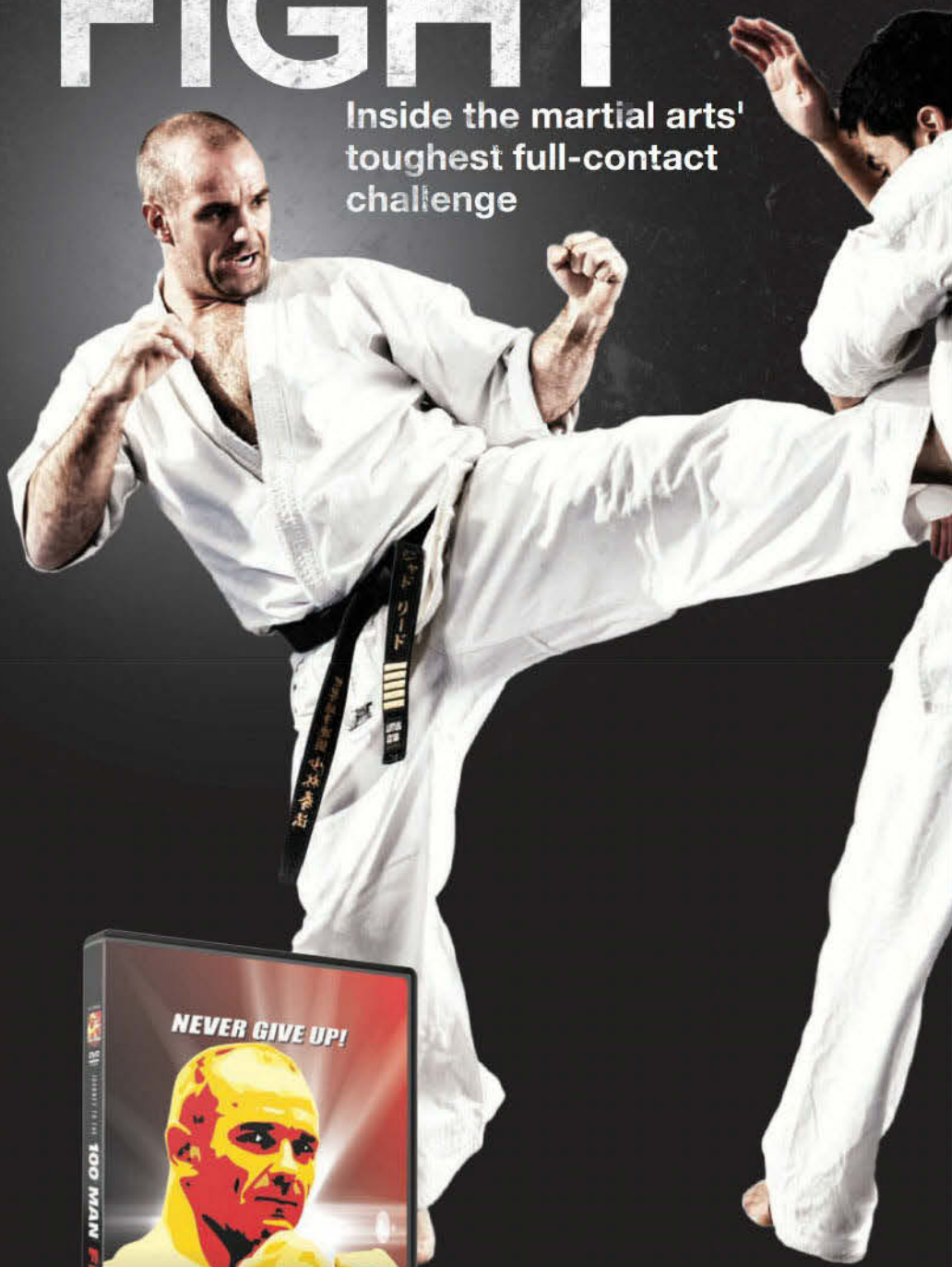
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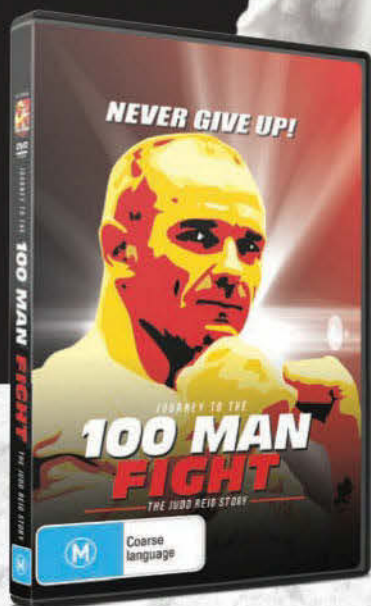
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NEWS & EVENTS



LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL FIGHTERS COMPETE AT THE VKKA CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2015 Victorian Kyokushin Karate Association (VKKA) Championships has delivered a strong turnout of both local and international competitors. The VKKA has been holding tournaments since 1977 and has a well-deserved reputation for putting on a great event.

"This year's tournament was on April 26, exactly 21 years after Sosai Mas Oyama passed away," said event organiser Shihancho Gary Viccars.

"This made it a very special event and the fighters responded with a 25 per cent increase in the number of knockdown competitors and fighters from five states competing.

"For the first time, South Australia fielded a very strong team as did Tasmania. New South Wales fighters are always serious contenders and the Queensland contingent was also not to be taken lightly."

The morning consisted of a non-contact (gi touch only) event that saw 168 competitors contest 27 divisions.

"The smiles of the medal winners as they stepped onto the podium was heart-warming and spoke volumes about the goals for the event," said Viccars.

"In the knockdown, 78 competitors over 18 divisions provided plenty of action for the spectators. A most pleasing aspect was to see the lower grade divisions full of fighters as this shows a great future as they progress through the ranks.

"Naturally, most interest was centred on the open divisions and there were a total of nine

international fighters scattered through these."

THE WINNERS OF THE OPEN DIVISION WERE:

Female Open Super Lightweight

Champion: Ai Ikeda
Runner-up: Sherriden Trevena

Male Open Lightweight

Champion: Julius Wsol
Runner-up: Linc Francis

Female Open Middleweight

Champion: Lisa Hodder
Runner-up: Natalie Jorgensen

Male Open Middleweight

Champion: Samuel Shields
Runner-up: Peter Anderson
3rd: Abdullah Jafari

Female Open Heavyweight

Champion: Leah Haar
Runner-up: Ysobel Jarjoura
3rd: Sarah Moses

Male Open Heavyweight

Champion: Jesse Shields
Runner-up: Aharon Claridge
3rd: Rodney Peatey

Male Open Super Heavyweight

Champion: Terrence English
Runner-up: Elias Kavadias
3rd: David Weir-Smith

"There were many who stamped themselves as fighters to watch in the future and many of the 'known' fighters are just getting better," said Viccars.

"The 2016 event promises to be even better and if the trend continues, we will be back to the 'heady' days of Kyokushin with 100 fighters in the event."

The Greatest Gracie visits Melbourne

Ten-time Brazilian jiu-jitsu world champion and MMA star Roger Gracie recently visited Melbourne, where he hosted a packed seminar at Peter De Been's newly renovated St Kilda headquarters.

Gracie conducted separate basics and advanced seminars on the day, with both attended by close to 60 participants each. In the morning's basics seminar, Gracie went through the intricacies of the closed guard. While the techniques shown were simple, it was the concepts that were stressed by Gracie.

The afternoon was reserved for the advanced seminar and drew a host of Melbourne's top Black-belts. Gracie chose to focus on a handful of his trademark techniques —

taking the back from the turtle position, an arm-bar from the back, back choke, mount control, armbar from mount and his famous cross choke from mount.

Gracie was surprised and pleased with just how popular BJJ is here in Australia, feeling its popularity will only grow bigger with time.

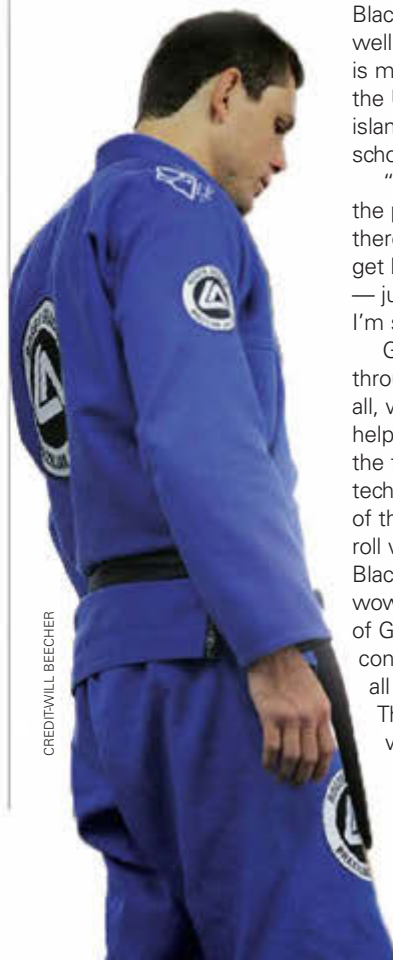
"To be honest, the level here is much better than I thought," said Gracie.

"I didn't realise jiu-jitsu was so popular in Australia — there are so many academies and the response to my seminars were great. I have a lot of great friends here, which makes coming back a lot of fun.

"Australia is obviously a very big place, so nowadays you have a lot of different academies all over the country with a lot of great Black-belts to show for it as well. Because everything is much more compact in the UK, being on a smaller island, there are fewer schools.

"With that being said, the popularity of the art over there is huge and it will only get better in years to come — just like here in Australia, I'm sure."

Gracie was available throughout the seminar to all, walking the mats and helping participants with the finer details of all the techniques. Towards the end of the day, he took time to roll with a few of the other Black-belts. Participants were wowed by the efficiency of Gracie's technique — he controlled and tapped out all of his sparring partners. The seminar concluded with participants posing for group and individual photos.



CREDIT: WILL BECHER



Jamie Murray (left) with fellow BJJ instructor Mick Pope during the Grapple-A-Thon

The record-breaking 33-hour Grapple-A-Thon

Jamie Murray, one of the head BJJ instructors at Melbourne's Renegade MMA & BJJ Gym, has broken a world record by spending 33 hours straight, teaching and partaking in BJJ classes.

The massive endurance effort was a way of raising funds to help build a BJJ gym in Bali to help teach the less fortunate.

"A few of the boys were sitting around here at Renegade and we wanted to raise money for a while for this project in Bali, where we are opening up a charity gym to teach to the slum areas," said Murray.

"We thought we would look up what the longest class ever taught was and try and beat it. There was some guy in America who did 30 hours and one minute and we thought, 'We can't let some American bloke have the record — we better have a crack.'"

Murray decided to go for 33 straight hours, with just a five-minute break every two hours to use the bathroom.

"I just did what a BJJ class consists of — warm-up, technique, drill, role and I just did that repeatedly every two hours," said Murray.

"I wanted to go for the longest ever BJJ class, so we started with a warm-up at 6am on Friday and at 3pm on Saturday we finished off with a handshake. I was on the mat the entire time, apart from a toilet break every two hours."

The 33-hour-long class was a struggle at times, but some gradings in the last few hours helped give Murray some more energy to pull through.

"I was pretty tanked," admitted Murray.

"I think the hardest part was 3am and 4am, but when the sun came up I had a couple cups of coffee and felt good. We had some gradings

booked in, so for the last few hours we gave out some Blue-belts, Purple-belts and had a Black-belt grading too — that was a real great way to finish off."

While the record has not yet been officially recognised, the most important part of the event is already making its way to Bali. Murray and Renegade raised over \$10,000 on the day and another \$4,000 has been raised so far online — a perfect insight into the true character of the martial arts community.

"Man, I'm just totally blown away by the generosity of the grappling community. That also extends to the martial arts community itself," said Murray.

"It's a good thing to promote because quite often we can be given a bad rap, especially with the cage dilemma here in Victoria and all the rubbish the media portrays — like we are cage-fighting morons."

The funds all go to 'Grapplers for Christ', the organisation set up to build the gym in Bali and teach the people living in the slums.

"It is a Christian-based organisation that is non-denominational, so there are lots of people involved in it from across different churches," explained Murray.

"There was some people already teaching over in Bali, but it was in a church. We want to kind of stay out of churches because it can be a drawback, people don't want to go to a church. So we wanted to have a gym area that they could go to — it's not a religious thing, it's more about just teaching grappling and giving some hope to people."

If you would like to support Murray and his cause go to <http://www.gofundme.com/grappleathon>

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NEWS & EVENTS

THE 39TH AUSTRALIAN KYOKUSHIN CHAMPIONSHIPS ARE COMING!

The AKKA Championships are the longest running full-contact karate championships in Australia, having started in 1977 with Kyokushin founder Sosai Mas Oyama as the guest of honour. This year's event will be held on 15–16 August at the Sydney University Sports & Aquatic Centre in Darlington.

The championships are expected to draw a big field of competitors, as previous years have had more than 300 fighters. AKKA chairman Hanshi John Taylor is confident that this year's event will be equally successful.

The first day of the championships will consist of non-contact competition, with fighters ranging from ages five to over 60 in the veterans' division.

The second day will focus on full-contact fighting, with an added

incentive for fighters to participate: the final results will determine who joins the AKKA's fully funded team at the 2015 European Championships in Sweden on 17 October.

Among the fighters vying for a spot on the Aussie team will be the 2014 female heavyweight Kyokushin world champion, Ysobel Jarjoura, as well as most of the Australian team from the 2014 IKO-Matsushima World Championships in South Africa.

Both days of competition are open to any martial artist, regardless of style. Further information and applications can be obtained from the AKKA website at www.akka.com.au or by contacting Hanshi Taylor via email to shihantaylor@ozemail.com.au, or by phoning 0418 484 100.



Raymond Daniels wins again by spinning back-kick

Raymond Daniels has taken out Justin Baesman with a beautiful spinning back-kick at GLORY 21 — the same kick he displayed in the May issue of *Blitz*.

Daniels' sports karate background means his amazing kicking ability has been on full display during his kickboxing career, often thrilling the crowd with spectacular kicks.

His karate background makes him a real point of difference in GLORY, with his professional kickboxing career now at 7–2, with six finishes and four of those by spinning heel kicks.

It took Daniels just 55 seconds to finish Baesman with one of his signature kicks, but that one minute was one of the most action-packed ever seen at GLORY, completely overcoming Baesman with a flurry of head kicks.

"Everybody trains hard but there can only be one at the end of the night,"



Raymond Daniels finishes Justin Baesman

Daniels told Stephen Quadros after the fight.

"Someone is going to go home a little bit upset at the end of the day.

"I maintained my distance and I saw that he really didn't understand the direction where my kicks were coming from. So, I felt I could set him up and finish it with my legs."

Okinawa's Taira Sensei tours Queensland and Victoria

Taira Masaji Sensei, 9th Dan and chairman of Okinawa Goju Ryu Kenkyukai, visited Australia earlier this year to conduct seminars in both Queensland and Victoria.

Hosted by Okinawa Goju Ryu Kenkyukai, participants came from three states and seven Goju-based styles to learn from Taira Sensei.

Having practitioners from many Goju systems enabled Taira Sensei to do what he loves most: share his knowledge and applications with anyone who has an open mind and a willingness to learn.

"Taira Sensei once again demonstrated why he is renowned as the master of *bunkai* and kata applications and interpretations," said seminar organiser and Australian Shibu Cho (branch chief) Peter Keogh Sensei.

"As someone who loves to train every day and embraces every opportunity to share his knowledge, [he] treated Melbourne participants to over 15 hours of training opportunities over the course of Sensei's visit."

Apart from the main seminar held in Diamond Creek, Vic, Taira seized the opportunity each night to attend four dojos, in McKinnon, Reservoir, Heathmont and Templestowe. Five students were also given the honour of being graded to their 2nd Dan in front of Taira Sensei.

"Taira Sensei is not only an exceptional martial artist but also a great person who embraces the culture of the people and countries he visits," said Keogh. "We were all grateful to have many opportunities to enjoy his company once again.

"This is the fifth year running that the practitioners of Victoria have had an opportunity to train with this great master. Due to Sensei's overwhelming popularity and demand for his time around the world, dates have already been locked in for Taira Sensei's 2016 visit!"



Taira Sensei (left) with Peter Keogh Sensei

CYCLISTS GO THROUGH GRUELLING MILITARY-STYLE CAMP WITH PAUL CALE

Eighteen of Australia's top female cyclists were recently put through tough military-style training by *Blitz* 'Close Quarters' columnist Sergeant Paul Cale at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra in preparation for a battle on the international circuit.

The 2015 camp, which was modelled on Australian military special forces' selection methodologies and activities by the AIS's senior sports physiologist Dr David Martin, will see 18 hand-picked riders from across Australia assessed for attributes required to compete in the international peloton.

Since its inception in 2011, the brutal selection camp has become renowned as one of the toughest in Australian sport. The eight-day camp will place the athletes in a variety of different mentally and physically challenging situations, each being carefully monitored by a dedicated team of sports scientists, psychologists and coaches.

The methodology used has been recognised by the scientific community at two major conferences and more recently in an international conference in Qatar. The athletes underwent a variety of scientific testing, which included blood test screening, DEXA scans, BMR activity recording, skin-folds, lactate testing, VO2 max testing, power profiling and 'crash proofing' (learning to crash and tumble) with Cale — special projects director of Combat.

In the past, the selection camp has also seen the athletes have their



phones and laptops confiscated, be on very restricted eating regimes, deprived of feedback, and made to complete unscheduled rides of up to 200 km.

Each day the athletes become increasingly emotionally and physically fatigued until only five athletes remain. Athletes may request permission to leave the camp or may be cut from the camp and sent home at any time over the eight-day period.

The goal of the gruelling military-style camp was to efficiently recognise all of the qualities and weaknesses of these aspiring professional athletes over a short period of time. The process also assists athletes in discovering their weaknesses and prepares them for circumstances they may encounter when living and racing in Europe as a professional athlete.

A team of specialists were on hand to ensure that all athletes who were unsuccessful in gaining a spot on the High5 Australian Road Development team will be supported and encouraged in continuing to pursue their dreams to become a professional cyclist.



Events BJJ's big Sydney Cup

The Events BJJ Sydney Cup tournament saw a great turnout, with 150 adults and 150 kids competing at the Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre in Ryde, NSW earlier this year.

"We had a great response from the women's division," said Anthony Lange of Lange's MMA.

"The pocket rocket Blue-belt women continue to impress with very technical matches.

"There was a super technical match for the Male Novice Adult 79-kg Gi, with J. Glassman (Will-Machado) pulling out a *berimbolo* sweep to dominate his match, winning the gold. Another outstanding final was the Blue-belt final 79-kg between J. Bainbridge of Gracie Barra and D. Karren of Will-Machado with Bainbridge taking the Gold.

"The Brown-belt matches were especially exciting this tournament,

with J. O'Sullivan from Nova Uniao putting in a great display of BJJ, rising to the top of the hard-fought division."

SOME OF THE OTHER RESULTS FROM THE SYDNEY CUP WERE:

• Female Novice Master 2 71-kg Gi

» Gold: E. Vass (Will Machado)

» Silver: S. Aguis (Gracie Barra)

• Female Blue-belt Adult 56-kg Gi

» Gold: L. Baroudi (Gracie Barra)

» Silver: T. Tan (Legacy)

• Male Purple Adult Open

» Gold: S. Hadley (Giant Team Australia)

» Silver: J. Fraraccio (De la riva International)

» Bronze: W. Oliveira (myBJJ Team)

• Male Black Adult Open

» Gold: P. Stolyar (Southside MMA Academy)

» Silver: D. Brooksbank (The Dojo)

Noosa martial artist given Tokyo Hall of Fame honour

Noosa martial artist and bodyguard Russell Price will be inducted into the World Organisation of Martial Arts Hall of Fame in Tokyo, Japan during July.

Price, who has had a decorated martial arts career that includes movie stunt work, military service and bodyguarding, said he is humbled by the honour.

"For myself personally and for my instructor, [Hirokazu] Kanazawa Sensei, it was recognition of the time I spent through my whole martial arts career in Shotokan karate — to be recognised for that is something truly remarkable," said Price. "Being just a local trainer and an international trainer,

it is truly humbling to be listed among the world's greats — I'm still very overwhelmed by it all."

The induction is recognition of a busy martial arts career that has also dipped into the celebrity world, protecting some of Hollywood's most famous.

"My bodyguard work stemmed from working for quite some time in Hong Kong as a stuntman on some movies," explained Price. "That meant that I brushed shoulders with quite a few celebrities and with my background in both military and martial arts, I ended up doing some security work.

"About a year ago I was

looking after Brad [Pitt] and Ange [Jolie] and the children during their stay here in Australia, so I'm very fortunate to mix with these lovely people."

Aside from applying his martial arts skills to security and stunt work, Price also helps others restart their own martial arts journey with his health and training retreat, Camp Black, outside Noosa, Qld.

"I do a lot of one-on-ones with a lot of people I've met over the years, but Camp Black — my retreat and facility here — is my base and this is where most people zero themselves into," said Price of the camp.



NEWS & EVENTS

New Zealand and New Caledonia invade Aussie Open

Liverpool in Western Sydney was again host for the Australian Open Karate Championships earlier this year. Although international entries were a little down on previous years, there was a strong field of 780 entries for the event and that featured very strong contingents from New Zealand and New Caledonia.

The Australian Schools and University Championships has become the traditional Friday curtain raiser for the Aussie Open over recent years and this year over 300 athletes took to the mats in the name of their educational institution.

Jasmin Rafiq (University of Sydney) took the honours in Senior Female Kata, while in the Senior Male Kumite +78-kg division, all four medallists hailed from the University of Western Sydney, with Angel Georgieff taking gold.

The Female Senior Kata

was dominated by Victorian Renee Carusso, who claimed the gold over New Zealand's Andrea Anacan. In Junior Female Kata, Australia was out of luck with gold to Reilly Polaschek of New Zealand and New Caledonia filling the remaining places.

The boys didn't fair much better with the Male Junior Kata going to New Zealander Richard Rahardja and silver to his Kiwi teammate Isaac Hoshi, with Aussies filling in the third places. In the seniors, James Guiliano held the gold high for Australia with a tide of Kiwis and New Caledonians swamping the rest of the podium.

The Under-21 Kata events had some better news for the locals with John Georgas of NSW taking gold in the men's, while the women's went to Kate Bromwich from Queensland.

The Senior Open Men's



Kumite saw Tsuneari Yahiro (NSW) triumph over New Zealander Shane Tregidga, with Aussies Seb Szalay and Angel Georgieff in the bronze positions. In the women's

open division it was an all-Australian affair with Evgeniya Podborodinkova (NSW) taking gold from Ivana Ljubic (Vic) with Kristina Perrin (WA) and Riana Loffel (Qld) taking home bronze.

AUSTRALIAN MARTIAL ARTISTS INDUCTED INTO PHILIPPINES HALL OF FAME

Bill Johnson, a Defendo Close Quarter Combat instructor and 6th Dan Black-belt in jujitsu, is the first Australian to be inducted into the Philippines Martial Arts Hall Of Fame, as well as being named International Master

Instructor of the Year.

Johnson, who has been going to the Philippines to train for 12 years, was given the honour earlier this year.

"It was absolutely fantastic," Johnson said. "The most important thing was that we had martial arts

instructors from around the world — Germany, Finland, England, America and so forth — come over. To meet and train with those guys, as well as the local grandmasters, was just a great experience."

Along with his induction, Johnson was also given the keys to the city.

"We were in Baguio, which is the summer capital of the Philippines up in the mountains, and we got given the key to the city," he said. "It was quite a big ceremony. We had local TV following us around and I felt like a little bit of a celebrity, to tell you the truth."

In his three-week trip, Johnson also travelled to different Philippines provinces to train with other masters and give seminars.

He will also bring one of the country's highly respected grandmasters, Garitony Nicolas, on his first tour to Australia this month.

"[Nicolas] is one of the foremost leaders of organising the martial arts in the Philippines — he's on the local TV, he's written over 20 books, he's a stuntman in the movies over there," said Johnson. "His knowledge on the history of the Philippines, but also the history of martial arts in the Philippines, is fantastic."

"I've trained with him and he is very fast, very skilful, especially with *balisong* [knives] double hands — he also does a blindfolded demonstration and he's very, very good."

We are going to do an introductory tour, mainly in the Newcastle/Sydney area."



Nine-year-old's fierce focus earns him Taekwondo Black-belt

Nine-year-old Zane Deguara recently achieved his taekwondo Black-belt just a few years after taking up the martial art as a means to help with his autism spectrum disorder.

"I had to do two patterns, about 20-something moves, sparring and break a board using an arm technique and a leg technique," said Zane.

Training out of Taekwondo World in Castle Hill, NSW, Zane has excelled at a sport he originally took up as a way to help with his autism.

"Originally his occupational therapist suggested it and then we looked into it," said Zane's mother, Suzanne.

"I was hesitant at first because I was afraid that he would get hurt and at that stage he was a little bit small for his age, so I was concerned — but he's grown a lot now.

"When I saw the amount of protective gear they wear and how closely the masters controlled everything, I felt a lot better about it."

Speaking to Zane, it's very clear he's a bright and well-spoken nine-year-old, but Suzanne tries to explain his condition saying, "For him it's mainly a sensory thing."

"His main senses are all affected and more heightened. Also, his social ability and the way he interprets the world is just a little bit different — he just sees things through a different set of eyes to other people."

Taekwondo has proved to be a vital part in Zane's battle with autism, helping to improve his motor skills and his overall fitness.

"He has become much more coordinated with both his fine motors kills and gross motors kills," explained Suzanne.

"He's much quicker on his feet, more agile, he's more flexible, he's definitely very physically fit and he is able to focus for really long periods of time now, which had previously been a bit of a struggle."

The often structured and routine world of martial arts has also been the perfect fit for someone like Zane, who at times can struggle with sudden change.

"It changes, but it doesn't change massively," said Zane.



Zane with Master Shin

"I know the sparring days and the non-sparring days, so I generally expect anything in a certain order."

"Because he knows what to expect and they are very, very routine orientated, as are the patterns, it's really helpful for him," added Suzanne.

Zane has worked hard to achieve his Black-belt and it's an effort that has made his mum "extremely proud."

"I've seen how hard he's tried and just how hard things that other kids take for granted are for Zane," she said.

"The simple things that aren't a big deal to other kids are harder for Zane, so I'm just so proud of the way he's coped with it.

"He puts in hours of work at home doing taekwondo, his patterns and his kicking, and it was really good to see all of his efforts pay off."

Zane's taekwondo journey doesn't end with his Black-belt either, with the young man's eyes now set on higher Dan grades.

"There are different Dans of Black-belt that I'm hoping to get to and I'm probably not even an eighth of the way to those, but I'd like to get there," said Zane.



Australian BJJ champ takes on the world

David Thomas, a state, national and Pan Pacific BJJ champion in the novice (White-belt) division, recently tested himself against the world's best at the IBJJF World Championships in Long Beach, California — taking home a bronze medal in the Adult Middle-Heavy Novice division.

The martial artist, who began competing solely in BJJ only two years ago, has been racking up titles across the region, most recently dominating at the AFBJJ 2014 Pan Pacific Championships.

"I've got three Central Queensland championships, four North Queensland titles, three Queensland state titles, three Australian National titles and three Pan Pacific titles," said Thomas.

It was his effort at the Pan Pacific Championships that qualified him to take on world-class competitors in the US and will no doubt see him lifted from the novice ranks very soon.

"It was an amazing blessing," said Thomas. "I just take everything in my stride and while it was quite daunting, at the same time I just treat every competition as just another experience. I am grateful I was there and got to represent my family, my club, my teammates and my community."

Thomas also made the journey to the US with his family, as they are the ones he feels he needs around him during a competition.

"My coaches are all self-employed and are all very busy, so it was just family with me," said Thomas.

"I was over there with my wife, my two kids and my mother-in-law. That's pretty much how I roll for all my comps, I just like to have a really solid family support group around me — that keeps me grounded.

Despite the obvious rise in talent level he faced in the US, Thomas was determined not to make it easy on himself, participating in divisions that wouldn't give him an easy ride.

"I could have gone in the masters division and pretty much guaranteed a semi-final match-up straight away, because they don't get the numbers," explained Thomas. "But I wanted to test myself against the best, so I dropped down to the adults, which was a stacked division and all I could be was positive. Win or lose, it's about the experience — all you can do is your best."

MARTIAL MOVIES WITH CLINT MORRIS

Dave Bautista as a
Bond villain



MMA star smashes through the Warrior's Gate

Dave Bautista will star in *Warrior's Gate*, a Luc Besson-produced action epic that kicked off its shoot in China in early May. Written by Besson and Robert Kamen (*Taken*), the Matthias Hoene-helmed movie follows a teenager who is magically transported to China and learns to convert his videogame skills into those of a kung fu warrior. Bautista recently shot the newest James Bond movie *Spectre*.

ACTION ACTOR'S DEATH NOT DRUG RELATED

Months after his death, the results of Darren Shahlavi's autopsy have revealed that the actor and martial artist did not die from an overdose as the media reported but from a sudden and fatal heart attack.

Mr Shahlavi, who was found dead on 14 January 2015, had atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease, with his left anterior descending artery 95 per cent blocked and the left side of his heart enlarged. Contrary to earlier reports, he had no drugs or alcohol in his system at the time.

Since Shahlavi's tragic death, his family have been in contact with the charity, Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY), an organisation committed to preventing sudden cardiac death in young people through screening, awareness and research, as well as providing expert bereavement support to families that have lost a loved one to heart disease.

Alison Cox MBE, chief executive and founder of CRY, comments: "As we know from our experience of supporting bereaved families, on a weekly basis, any reporting — often unfounded — or



suggestion of the use of drugs or medication before a sudden death, can lead to rumours and cruel 'whispering' campaigns that simply exacerbate the already horrendous level of grief being experienced."

Shahlavi's family are now determined to bring awareness to both the disease and the CRY organisation. They said in a statement, "We hope that no other family has to go through the grief and pain that we are experiencing and that their loved ones get screening and subsequent

treatment if necessary, [which] could prevent the tragic outcome that all who loved Darren are trying to come to terms with."

Shahlavi can be seen in two new films, *Pound of Flesh* with Jean-Claude Van Damme, and *Tomorrowland*, a science-fiction film from Disney, starring George Clooney. He had recently completed work on the *Kickboxer* reboot, again with Van Damme.

[The staff at *Blitz* express our sincere condolences to the Shahlavi family — Ed]

Seagal not Speakman in this Perfect Weapon

Steven Seagal will star in the Keoni Waxman-directed *Perfect Weapon* for AML International. Not to be confused with the '90s classic starring Jeff Speakman, the hitman thriller sounds like a cross between Sly Stallone vehicle *Assassins* and recent Sean Penn vehicle *The Gunman*: in the not-too-distant future, an elite assassin fails to terminate his target and finds himself on the run from the totalitarian state's secret government organisation that employs him. Seagal is next in *Absolution* (which is getting a cinema release in the US!), co-starring Vinnie Jones, and recently started filming Michael Winnick's *Code of Honor*.



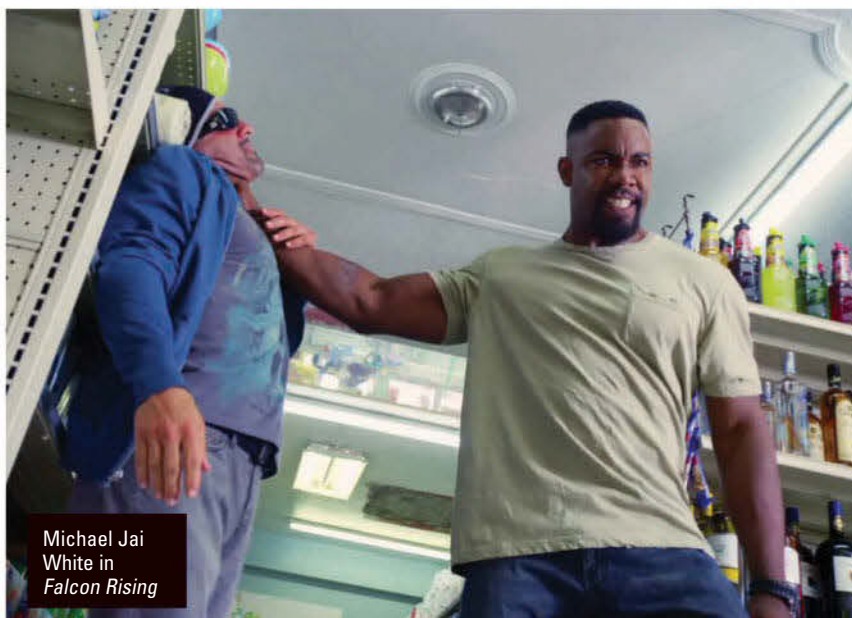
Seagal keeps
his aikido for
back-up

DONNIE YEN FLICK TO FEATURE KUNG FU FIGHTING DOGS

Donnie Yen will star in the 3D kung fu pic *Big Rescue*. The Lian Ting-directed movie tells the story of a group of people who embark on a fun-filled cross-country road trip but are captured by an evil villain. They are rescued by a team of kung fu fighting dogs who save them in the nick of time. Yen will first appear in the sequel to *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, which premieres on Netflix.



Donnie Yen in
Special ID



Michael Jai White in *Falcon Rising*

Back in my day...

Out promoting his new action movie *Skin Trade* (with Dolph Lundgren), actor Michael Jai White explained just how far karate schools and martial arts trainers have come since the day he first entered a dojo. "Every karate instructor had to have another source of income. It was really a hobby, or kind of like a spiritual thing," said the *Undisputed II* star, who began learning martial arts from the age of seven. "The nature of true martial arts is tantamount to a military-type training. Later, martial arts became a business, but when I was young, martial arts studios were exclusively in the ghetto, where life was really hard. There were no hand pads or protective gear. It was very primordial. My first instructor had sticks and rocks that he hit people with. If you did something wrong, you had to stand on your knuckles on concrete. We trained on concrete floors. There was nothing glamorous about the way martial arts was first taught in this country."

MMA is Guzman's dream

Before he turned to acting, *Step Up All In* star Ryan Guzman was keen on a career in the MMA arena. "That's a big, big passion of mine," he said. "I still train today. I hope eventually to be successful enough to take time off and get back into MMA to do some fights. I love it... Hopefully I'll be fighting in the UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship). That was my dream. I would like to be fighting in the UFC if I wasn't an actor now."

Guzman's most recent film *The Boy Next Door* presented him with the opportunity to act opposite real-life girlfriend Jennifer Lopez.



Ryan Guzman, MMA hopeful



Chan and Wilson in the original *Shanghai Noon*

Shanghai Surprise

Umpteen years after it was last mentioned, the once-proposed second sequel to Jackie Chan/Owen Wilson comedy *Shanghai Noon* is back on MGM's to-do list.

Shanghai Dawn – long set as the title – will see Chan and Wilson reprise their roles as bumbling Chon Wang and Roy O'Bannon from 2000's *Noon* and its 2003 sequel, *Shanghai Knights*.

No word on a director; Tom Dey directed the first, David Dobkin the second.

The Tracking Board, who had the first word on the project's new movements, say it's currently out to writers. MGM head Jonathan Glickman will retain his position as producer on the third go round.

With a fourth *Rush Hour* film now unlikely (they're rebooting the franchise for television), Chan fans will be pleased to see the *Shanghai Noon* series back on track.

IVAN DRAGO VS THE THING

Dolph Lundgren will play a demon hunter in *Don't Kill It*. Kicking off its shoot in Alaska this July, the movie sees Lundgren's character team with a reluctant FBI agent to battle an ancient evil unleashed in a small Alaskan town, leaving a trail of death and destruction as it passes from host to host. Mike Mendez directs.



Dolph Lundgren

CLINT'S PICS

AT THE CINEMA: *Spy*

AT THE DVD STORE: *Seventh Son*

MARTIAL ARTS GEAR

BOOK: THE 6 CORE ELEMENTS: THE SLT & HISTORY OF WING CHUN

The first book from Sifu Sergio Iadarola, *The 6 Core Elements: The SLT and History of Wing Chun*, is a frank and often revealing account of the author's fight through the frustrations that dog many a Wing Chun practitioner — namely, the politics and secrecy surrounding lineage, and the propagation of myth and misinformation, which together can sometimes make it difficult for students to know whether they are on the 'true' track to technical prowess or being strung along for their sifu's benefit more than their own.

Documenting Iadarola's search for a path back to the source — that is, the Wing Chun that was developed on the legendary Red Boats of China — the book describes his personal Wing Chun journey, which began in Europe with Sigung Leung Ting's WingTsun (a branch from Yip Man/Hong Kong) and ultimately took him all over Asia and

the world in search of eminent masters from different lineages.

As well as his personal accounts, the book covers numerous elements of Wing Chun, including: the legend of the art's founder, Yim Wing Chun, whether she existed and how the art was really created; the ancestor systems of Emei 12 Zhuang and Fujian White Crane; who created the Siu Nim Tau, Chum Kiu and Biu Tze

forms; various Wing Chun legends like Dr Leung Jan and Yuen Kay San; the difference between the Siu Lin Tau and Siu Nim Tau forms; 'force flow' and Wing Chun's internal aspects; and much more from both the technical and historical realms.

Iadarola's broad scope and openness to all branches of the art make this book valuable for any Wing Chun practitioner. Renowned Aussie master David Peterson of the Wong Shun Leung Wing Chun style, in one of four forewords for the book penned by masters of different lineages, wrote: "[Sergio] deserves a great deal of thanks from us all for taking the time and making the effort to discover the authentic history of one of the world's great cultural treasures."

Supplier: sifusergio.com/shop

SAMURAI GRADING BELTS

Suitable for almost every martial art style, WWMA's dependable Samurai coloured belts come in black, brown, green, purple, red, orange, yellow and white. Made from a hard-wearing 100 per cent cotton weave, the belts are a standard length and 4cm width.

Price: \$7.60 each

Supplier: www.worldwidemartialarts.com.au



HYPERFLY RANK RASH GUARD

With a bold new design delivered in white, blue, purple, brown and black, DOorDIE's Hyperfly Rank Rash Guard enables you to display your BJJ rank when grappling with or without a gi. Approved by the IBJJF and designed to withstand the rigours of competition, the Hyperfly Rank Rash Guard features a supportive contoured compression fit and antibacterial laser-cut seams for comfort and ease of movement. Choose between short- and long-sleeve models, and a junior range featuring a variety of other colours.

Price: \$74.95 (short sleeve) / \$79.95 (long sleeve)

Supplier: www.fightlife.com.au



WWMA MMA GLOVES

Constructed with open palms to enable accurate hand use in grappling, these fully leather MMA training gloves feature a single moulded pad covering the back of the hand and top knuckles, fastened tight with a Velcro wrist wrap. Available in four sizes (S, M, L and XL), in black and yellow.

Price: \$35

Supplier: www.worldwidemartialarts.com.au



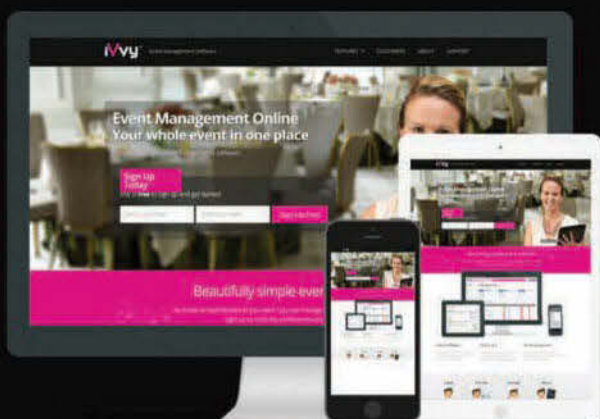
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5 MINUTES WITH MARKOS ROUNTHWAITE



The Gunman Goes Krav Maga

With the release of *The Gunman*, featuring Sean Penn as a krav maga-trained sniper on the run, *Blitz* caught up with New Zealand martial artist and fight choreographer Markos Rounthwaite about his role in the production.

Markos, how did you first get into the martial arts and where have you trained?

I was about seven years old when I started practising taekwondo. My father, now a master of the art, is my instructor. We began lessons out the back yard and once he thought my concentration level was appropriate for his TKD school, he took me along. We had many different associations we trained alongside. One particular martial arts school I remember training with through my childhood had a few young chaps I now call work colleagues and some of the best in today's film business as stunt coordinators — Ben Cooke and Allan Poppleton.

How did you first make the move from martial arts instructor to stuntman and fight coordinator?

As a child I had always acted out the more melodramatic scenes from the *Batman* TV show, James Bond films and, of course, *Star Wars*, so I guess the transition from 'play acting' to performing on screen was easy enough. I was, however, lucky enough to get a call from a local New Zealand stunt coordinator, Peter Bell, in the early '90s. He was after martial art fighters for two American TV shows called *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* and *Xena: Warrior Princess*. Peter taught us the very basics of stunt performing and working in front of the camera; the rest was learned with experience.

The stunt team I was a part of back then was very talented and awesome to work with, not to mention



Sean Penn's character lives up to the film's name in *The Gunman*



a good bunch of mates. We were forever creating not only new and different fights utilising everyone's fighting styles, but also enjoyed pushing the boundaries with action sequences in general. This was an integral time for me and is what spawned my interests beyond the stunt-performing level.

Your background is in taekwondo but the focus of *The Gunman*, in terms of the close-quarter fighting method, is krav maga. Why was that style selected?

Taekwondo has been a great backbone for my fight design but is really only the tip of the iceberg as far as what martial arts has to offer for film. There are so many effective and aesthetically

"Sean [Penn] was already a student of krav maga and stressed his desire to implement the style into the fight design."

strong styles out there, so I prefer to pull manoeuvres from across the board. Whenever I take on a project with fighting involved as well as general action sequences, I find it's beneficial to sit with the actors and discuss which fighting styles they prefer and what experience they've had, if any.

It's always beneficial to utilise their physical attributes. For *The Gunman*, we wanted to keep the realism and fortunately for me, Sean was already a student of krav maga and stressed his desire to

implement the style into the fight design. As you'll see in the film, it worked well.

Did you have much prior experience in krav maga? And how do you deliver on a director's wishes if their vision for the fighting style is different to your own experience and background?

In my opinion, the role of a stunt coordinator is not only to design cool action and maintain safety of both cast and crew during those sequences, but more importantly we're there to support the director's vision.

My knowledge of krav maga was limited. I knew it to be very effective but I required more to create believable sequences true to the fighting style, so we arranged for [Sean Penn's] instructor, Michael Margolin, to travel with us to Spain for the preproduction for two reasons. Firstly, it was beneficial for Sean to keep up his training, and secondly for our benefit. We worked closely with Michael and studied his methods and executions of techniques, then implemented what worked for the camera into the fights. *The Gunman* reflects this; it definitely gave us the desired effect.

How important a consideration is the actor's physical ability and general stature, demeanour, etc. in the decision to use a certain fighting method, and in selecting the techniques to use?

It's very important. When developing action sequences, I prefer to know the actor's weaknesses as well as their strengths. This way I am able to showcase their strong attributes, giving them techniques that complement both their own movement as well as their character to complete the storytelling process.

The action in *The Gunman* looks as designed: very gritty and real. What are the keys to achieving that when 'faking it', and in particular when using an actor who does not have a background in the chosen fighting method?

If you've ever come across a real fight, even between two martial artists, it's quite hard at times to distinguish some techniques. This is a key element that I implement for projects requiring realism: the techniques are there but slightly messy due to the environment, clothing, body positioning and opponent. As mentioned, Sean was already an exponent of krav maga, so we were already



Penn plays a former assassin on the run



Penn in action with co-star Jasmine Trinca

one step ahead of our game.

When designing the fight sequences, I laid out what I call the choreography template. Once competently learned and 'safety approved', it's up to the performers to apply the moves effectively given their positioning, safe distance and camera placement. This alters the look of each take slightly and, for me, lends more of an organic feel. This can be beneficial for any actor with limited fighting knowledge.

When I shoot or facilitate

the action, I like to break the fights into sections.

This way the performers are concentrating on just a few moves at a time. This helps with safety aspects — such as reducing fatigue, which can result in injuries — as well as being more rewarding for actors as they slowly tick off each section of the designed sequence.

Sean Penn is the consummate actor and also an experienced director; what was it like instructing

him in the fight scenes, and how much was he able to contribute himself to the action?

Sean is a great ambassador for the art. His attention and contribution to detail along with his hard work ethic was very inspiring for myself, and my stunt team. He put into effect everything we mentioned pertaining to the action and was an absolute pleasure to work with.

Did you also train Penn for the shoot?

Working closely with Sean's krav maga instructor, I took a slightly different approach. On top of the many rehearsals with him, we also implemented the moves choreographed into his personal training with his

tutor. From our standpoint, his physical preparation was already done and he was in great shape.

Did you participate in any of the action as a double on *The Gunman* or simply choreograph and train the actors? And is that your usual role?

My general vocation is stunt coordinator, fight choreographer and second unit director, all of which I was contracted to do for *The Gunman*. Kai Martin — UK stunt performer — was the stunt double for Sean Penn. ■

STAYING THE COURSE

Sensei Darren Friend: 30 years in aikido

As the saying goes, every journey begins with a single step — but for Sensei Darren Friend, his martial arts journey began with a single tackle. Coming from a competitive rugby background, Friend was no stranger to physical contact and was understandably sceptical when he caught his first glimpse of aikido. But as he lay on his back looking up at Shihan Joe Thambu's dojo ceiling, his opinion of the ancient Japanese aiki arts quickly changed. Thirty years on, Friend reflects on the leaps and bounds he's taken since that first bold step into the Yoshinkan.

STORY BY ZACH BROADHURST | IMAGES BY CHARLIE SURIANO

I met Joe Thambu Sensei through work. We were working at the same hotel and he was talking about what he was doing outside of work, this martial art called aikido — which was pre-Steven Seagal, so no one really knew about it,” explains Friend.

“At the time I was involved in university rugby, so I thought I was pretty physical. Because of shift work, I was thinking about doing something else, as I couldn't make all the team training sessions, so I went down to his dojo and he showed me a few things.”

Thambu's renown within Australian martial art circles aside, Friend was still less than convinced. After all, what can one 166-centimetre man do to you when you stand six feet tall and have spent your life running headfirst into packs of brutish rugby players?

“I said to Joe, ‘That looks great, how about I tackle you?’ and he said, ‘Sure.’ I went for it

and he put me on my back... I've been doing aikido ever since,” laughs Friend.

After years of training under Thambu, Friend decided he wanted to learn more about aikido's origins. A pilgrimage to Japan led him to the Aikido Yoshinkan *honbu* (headquarters) dojo and their Kokusai Senshusei course, which was originally developed for Tokyo's riot police and is renowned for its brutal intensity.

“It was hard,” Friend admits with a chuckle. “You hear a lot about how hard the training is and you think, ‘Okay, I'll prepare myself,’ but it was quite hard — in the year I did it, 14 people from around the world came to do the course but only four of us finished.”

There are a number of reasons why students don't get through the Senshusei course, but a packed and gruelling daily schedule is a major challenge for all comers.

“I used to arrive at 7:30am and you'd ease yourself into things, get changed into your dogi, then you have a meeting at 8:00 with a role call, then we'd do cleaning, then sitting in seiza by 8:25 and then do an hour class,” recalls Friend.

“After that we'd report to the teachers and have the next class from 10 to 11:30, then another short break before our last class at 1:30. Then there would be another report to the teacher and you'd be free by 2pm... and most of us went to work after that.”

Work for Friend usually lasted until 9pm, so he'd get home around 10 to eat, fall asleep and do it all again the next day.

Another challenge for those in the Senshusei course is one experienced by students across the world: lack of money, and therefore lack of food.

“The food was great, the only problem was not being able to eat enough — you

couldn't get enough food,” says Friend. “Money was an issue, we didn't have enough of that either. We were all like students anywhere: we were poor, we didn't have enough money, we didn't have enough food and we had this regimen of training we had to go through each day.”

A food shortage is problematic for anyone, but when most of your day is spent training, you can't afford to go without it. So Friend found himself eating many dishes to which he would have ordinarily turned up his nose.

“It just became a see-food diet — if you see it you eat it!” says Friend. “That was good because we were in Japan and there is a lot of Japanese food that isn't regularly consumed by Australians. Stuff that I might not have eaten if I hadn't have been absolutely famished, I ate and got used to very quickly. I developed a good taste for all



RESTRAINT VS RESISTANCE



1 Approaching from the side or the rear of the aggressor, Friend catches the wrist and extends the arm out and away from the target's body...

2 ...then drives his inside leg and hip forward, keeping the gripped wrist fixed (i.e. not pulling it back). This puts momentum into the aggressor, which Friend then maintains...

3 ...to manoeuvre him quickly around into the nearest wall, disorienting and unbalancing the aggressor. Friend keeps his inside hip and leg to the front for support and power...

4 ...then puts his weight into the shoulder to pin it against the wall (note: Friend is driving forward rather than pulling back on the arm).

Japanese food and now I really like it."

Being one of just four students to make it through the intense year-long course, Friend was asked to help with the following year's course and so he put his planned return to Australia on hold.

"My graduating group was pretty small, so they didn't have many people to choose from," says Friend. "Usually each year out of the 10 to 12 people that graduate, the top people are approached and asked if they'd like to stay on and assist with the next course. Once you graduate, that position is called *seiwainin*, which basically means 'assisting person' or 'helping person'.

"Once you've done that for a year, if you've shown good merit and good leadership, you become a *shidojin* [senior instructor] — then you are considered a teacher in the dojo."

Around this time, Peggy Woo, Friend's future wife, came to the honbu from Canada and was so captivated by aikido that she changed her plan to travel on to China.

"I went to Japan in 1994 and my plan was to go there, work a bit, save some money and then

head to China to study kung fu," Woo recalls, "[but] one of my roommates that I was living with at the time started doing aikido and said I should have a look.

"The first class that I watched was [with] Robert Mustard Sensei. He was teaching the class and I remember thinking how powerful and dynamic the techniques looked... I never did make it to China; I ended up in Japan for over 10 years."

Woo would also undertake the Senshusei course during her time in Japan, but unlike most foreign students, she was well set up by the time she gave it a shot.

"I first started at the honbu dojo as a regular student and I was quite lucky, because I was able to see other people do the course before me," says Woo.

"I started training in '94 and I did the Senshusei course in '97, I think. So, I got to see a few classes pass through and I thought in the back of my head, 'Is it really that difficult? Could I do it?' Eventually I gave it a go and it was actually more difficult than I thought it would be.

"I had a bit of an advantage, because I lived there for a few

years before doing the course. I had my own network, friends, a place to live, a job, so all of that was in place. Other people that came over specifically to do the course sometimes struggled because they didn't have a job, they didn't know the language and they didn't know many people, so in that respect I was very lucky.

Yet for Woo, her establishment in the dojo also came with a feeling of pressure and expectation to succeed.

"In another way it was a bit more difficult, because I felt I had something more to prove," she explains. "I'd been a regular student and I didn't want to give up, so I made it a bit tougher on myself and I pushed

"14 people came to do the course but only 4 of us finished."



Friend (right) with fellow Kokusai Senshusei graduates in 1993: (L-R) Paul Stephens (UK), Randy Stoner (USA) and Stephan Otto (Germany). All now run dojos in their countries of origin



5
If Friend needs to disengage or his foe turns in to his right (his only possible escape), Friend turns the same way...

6
...rotating his hips 180 degrees to finish right leg forward. As the aggressor comes off the wall, Friend completes the turn, bringing his weight onto the front leg...

7
...and into a strong posture that transfers the energy created from the hips into the aggressor, projecting him backward and accelerating his fall.

8
Staying well grounded allows Friend to easily transfer energy, and this strong shape and posture also minimises the chance he will be caught up in the throw or dragged down with his opponent.

myself a bit harder."

With both Friend and Woo being from foreign countries, they became assets to the honbu as they moved up the ranks, with Friend often assisting some of the most revered senior instructors in trips around the world and here in Australia.

"I did quite a few trips to Australia with different instructors. It was good to come home and bring those senior instructors home with you — it was quite an honour," says Friend. "I was lucky enough to go to Europe with Takeno Sensei and that was also quite an insight for me. Takeno Sensei has a reputation for being a real hard-arse, but off the mat he's a kind and gentle gentleman, and on that mat quite hard. It was nice to see him switch on and off like that."

Friend's responsibilities at the honbu increased as well, with the Aussie expat given the role of chief instructor of the Kokusai Senshusei course.

"At the time, my business card said, 'Chief Instructor International Section'," says Friend. "There is a class that is taught in English every morning and we were responsible for overseeing that and the other

instructors. We were also responsible for coordinating the Senshusei course and coordinating how the group of foreigners would click in with the Japanese riot police.

"The Yoshinkan honbu is a little bit militaristic in the way it is run and operated, so it's like taking responsibility for a platoon. It was quite a step up because you knew that everybody was looking at you for leadership, so you had to develop leadership skills very quickly if you didn't already have them."

While developing those leadership abilities, Friend also saw the opportunity to develop the way the Yoshinkan transformed their past students into future teachers of the Senshusei course.

"I didn't make any major changes as such, but I did improve the way we approached teacher training," says Friend. "Most of the Senshusei course is technical, in terms of your learning techniques and training them, but the last month or so is basically [about] becoming an instructor."

"What had happened in the past is you would do all of the technical stuff and then they'd turn around and say, 'Now

teach it' — which is fine, but we put more energy into getting people to have empathy with the students, how to isolate the elements a student needs, how to read a student and evaluate and pick out what elements of a technique you are going to teach and at what length and depth you are going to teach them."

At that point, Friend's planned 12-month stay in Japan had stretched on for more than a decade. It was the birth of his and Woo's first child that cemented their decision to head back Down Under.

"That had kind of been my goal from the beginning, although I hadn't planned to



Friend gets airborne acting as uke for Yoshinkan leader Takeno Kancho

take as long to achieve it as I had," says Friend. "My goal was to at least go and get as much technical information as I could and bring it back to Australia. By the time I'd been there 13 years, it was pretty apparent that aikido is what I needed to do.

The pair considered a move to Woo's home country of Canada, but the desire to avoid freezing cold winters meant Australia and its warmer climate won out.

"Well, of course Darren is from Melbourne, so we had family here and we talked about opening our own dojo," says Woo. "I'd lived in Japan for over 10 years, so I was quite used to living outside of Canada and it wasn't really that much of a sacrifice."

In 2005, Friend and Woo settled in Sydney to establish Aikido Yoshinkai NSW and while the lessons they learned during their time at Yoshinkan HQ obviously came with them, they didn't exactly set up their own Senshusei-style course.

"The technique is the same; I'll push students to a degree, but there are very few people that have signed up mentally to that kind of training — so I don't replicate that fully," says Friend. "To be quite honest, one instructor can't replicate that course because it's too tiring for the instructors as well. You need a staff of six or seven people to rotate through so that each session has a new person leading it and it's not the same as before."

Woo agrees that most students who come to their Sydney dojo aren't looking for something as intense as the Senshusei course, but the lessons she learnt from her time in Japan still benefit their students in Australia.

"The Senshusei course is a very intense one-year course, it's really an introductory course to give you an overview of what aikido is like," Woo explains. "In terms of training with

KING-HIT DEFENCE: JAMMING



1 If facing aggressive posturing and verbal attack, Friend remains calm and passive physically, but prepares mentally to take control as the aggressor advances.

2 As his foe swings for the KO, Friend drives forward with arms extended to jam the hit at the wrist and elbow before its speed and momentum pick up...



3 ...and firmly grips the elbow as he pushes forward with his right leg to move under his foe's arm (note he is not yet gripping the wrist)...

4 ...and rotate right through on his right foot to move away from the attacker, drawing him off balance. Friend then pulls his left foot back and rotates his hips, keeping his right leg in front...



5 ...to take the attacker's centre away from his feet and bring him down forwards. Friend then kneels on his left knee in close...

6 ... keeping his weight above the attacker's shoulder and the arm raised at an angle to prevent his foe from rising (note: Friend's right hand is still gripping the elbow).



7 To complete a restraining hold, Friend turns toward the attacker's head and drops his knee across the neck, controlling his weight. He then slips his right hand from the elbow to the attacker's hand and draws the hand and arm in towards him while pivoting at the base.

beginners who haven't done aikido before, the Senshusei course was a good introduction into that, but when you come over and you go into a regular class and you are teaching people who might not want to train as intensively as you do in Japan, you have to view each student individually and adapt to that.

"What I took from the course was self-discipline and being able to read people a bit better. Of course you make mistakes along the way, but you learn from those mistakes and you grow as a teacher and as a student."

Both Woo and Friend teach at Aikido Yoshinkai NSW and although they spent many years training together in Japan, their individual approaches to teaching have their differences.

"We are different people in the way we approach teaching and learning," says Friend. "She is very technical and goes into detail, whereas I teach broadly and as people progress, I'll put more and more detail on. She's small and I'm reasonably big, so there is a physical difference with the way you approach the techniques also."

Woo agrees that their methods may differ slightly, but in the end the essence of what they are teaching is the same, and that is the key. "Every instructor has their own way of teaching, their own approach to a technique and you have to find what is suitable for you — I think over the years we've been able to do that," she says.

"Not everyone teaching a martial art will always do a technique exactly the same and that's the beauty of aikido, it's always changing. As long as you keep the basic principles of balance, forward movement and just understanding why you are doing the technique in a certain way — if you can justify all of that, then I think you're on the right track."

Training together has been an important part of both Woo's and Friend's development as martial artists and both believe

it's important for men and women to learn together.

"Aikido doesn't rely on muscle power or muscle strength, so it's actually more difficult sometimes for guys to train with women, because they can't use brute strength," explains Woo. "You have to find a way to make the technique work without using muscle strength and power, and that's where the beauty of the technique lies."

Friend admits that the skill of putting strength aside to focus on technique is something he learned the hard way at the honbu.

"While I was still quite junior in the dojo, just after I finished the Senshusei course each day, there was a class between 10 and 11 called *kenshu* [research training]," he recalls.

"There were a bunch of ladies in their fifties who would train in that class and a senior teacher told me each day to go over and train with them. At the time, I thought it was a put-down or a punishment because I was taken away from training with the police and being told to train with these older ladies.

"The reality is they were these very small Japanese ladies and if you used brute strength on them, they would complain, retaliate and literally just run away — you couldn't just control them like you control a man. But if you learn to do the techniques correctly, then you can control them. If you can do that to old ladies without hurting them, your technique will be that much better when you do it on big, strong men."

There are many positives women gain from training with men, too, but it's the self-defence experience that probably offers the biggest advantage.

"The main thing that [my female students] get out of training with men is they become accustomed to the proximity of a male aggressor being right there in their face,"

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KING-HIT DEFENCE: DEFLECTING FORCE



1 If approached by a potential assailant, Friend stays calm and mentally prepares to move forward, keeping his arms low so as not to trigger aggression.

2 As the attacker launches a wide haymaker and commits his body to the blow, Friend moves forward and inside its arc, raising his arms...

3

...to close with the attacker, striking to the neck/chest as his left arm contacts the attacker's right, staying loose to 'feel' its path...



4 ...and guide it through, with Friend swinging his rear leg away to allow the attacker's momentum to continue coming forward and draw him off balance.

5 As he feels the attacker lose balance, Friend turns his hips to accelerate his foe forward so he overbalances fully and falls to the floor...



6

...while Friend keeps his back upright and posture strong so he doesn't get pulled down if the attacker tries to prevent the fall.

explains Friend. "If you are there for self-defence, you need to have at least that experience if you are going to be able to execute technique on somebody."

Aside from running his aikido school, Friend also imparts to troubled youths the wisdom gathered in three decades of aikido training, in a bid to turn their lives around.

"I run a six-week program that is basically teaching kids to communicate better," says Friend. "We use martial arts training, and particularly aikido, as a metaphor for that. These kids have had all sorts of social and family trouble, and quite a few of them have been in trouble with the police. We get them in, get them sweating, make them work pretty hard and then we will show them different techniques where we

avoid an oncoming strike and gain an advantage to apply an aikido technique — and then talk about how that can be a bit of a metaphor for life."

Despite a busy schedule, Friend finds joy in helping the kids and sees the importance of giving them a second chance. After all, a second chance is something his own young son experienced personally after almost dying in front of Friend before spending four days in a coma.

"He collapsed on the beach," recalls Friend of the incident. "We didn't have any knowledge of [the cause]; it's a very rare condition and it can't be diagnosed. They have only found out about it in the past 10 years or so, because most people just drop dead — they don't survive the event."

"Luckily, when my kid came

down with it, we were there and some other people were there and together we kind of fumbled through CPR and the ambos showed up and did the rest."

The condition means Friend's son can no longer do competitive sports that would set his adrenaline racing, but he can still train with his father in aikido.

"It's adrenaline based, so there is nothing structurally wrong with his heart at all — that's why they can't scan to look for it," explains Friend. "If he produces adrenaline, that can send his heart into an irregular rhythm. He still exercises, he still trains with me... Aikido isn't excitement-based; all kids get excited, but we don't rev them up like you would do at most sporting events. There is a lot of

emphasis on training hard and getting into a sweat, but also staying calm under pressure."

His son's collapse was terrifying for the whole family, but Friend thinks it has given him at least a little insight into what it means to act under true pressure, and what friend and *Blitz* columnist Paul Cale, another Yoshinkan Black-belt, would have gone through in military combat.

"I know Paul pretty well and I said to him, 'I now kind of know what it is like to be in combat' — it was the closest thing to a combat situation I'll ever experience," says Friend. "People could have been shooting at me and I couldn't have cared less; it was total confusion and pandemonium. But you go through it, you adjust, you come out the other side and life goes on." ■



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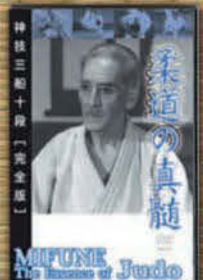
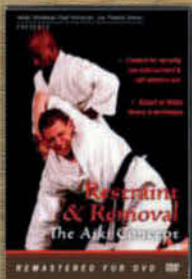
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The Dragon of Wudang MOUNTAIN

Inside China's Taoist kung fu

Wudang or Wutang kung fu should probably be better understood than it is — after all, a world-famous rap group (the Wu-Tang Clan) took the style's name as its own, and later the blockbuster that introduced Western cinemagoers to the high-wire ways of Chinese kung fu — the Oscar-winning *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* — saw the glamorous Zhang Ziyi and Chow Yun-Fat battle atop bamboo forests with Wudang technique. Even Jackie Chan's *Karate Kid* remake used locations and authentic practitioners from Wudang Mountain to show where his character studied his kung fu. Pop culture and the general martial arts community are slowly finding out that there is more to kung fu than Bruce Lee and Shaolin monks — but what is the Wudang all about?

STORY BY RAMESH PATEL



Situated in China's Hubei Province, Wudang Mountain is a world-famous centre for Taoism/Daoism cultivation and study. The Taoist temples of Wudang are still active today and are protected as one of 730 registered World Heritage sites of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). And inside those temples, Wudang wushu or kung fu is still practised by Taoist priests today.

It was my fascination with the myths of Shaolin versus Wudang that led me along the path to Wudang Mountain. Wudang wushu is more than a single system found at one temple that represents it, which differs from Shaolin kung fu and its origins in Shaolin Temple. Upon my first visit to Wudang, long before movies made it famous outside China, there were no roads or buses to take; it was a 28-hour train ride from Beijing and a further three hours to get to Purple Cloud Temple to learn from Wudang's most reputed master, Grandmaster Zhong Yun Long. At that time, there were a handful of students studying under the grandmaster, most of who now are now world-renowned Wudang masters passing on the style through seminars, movies, schools, books and so on.

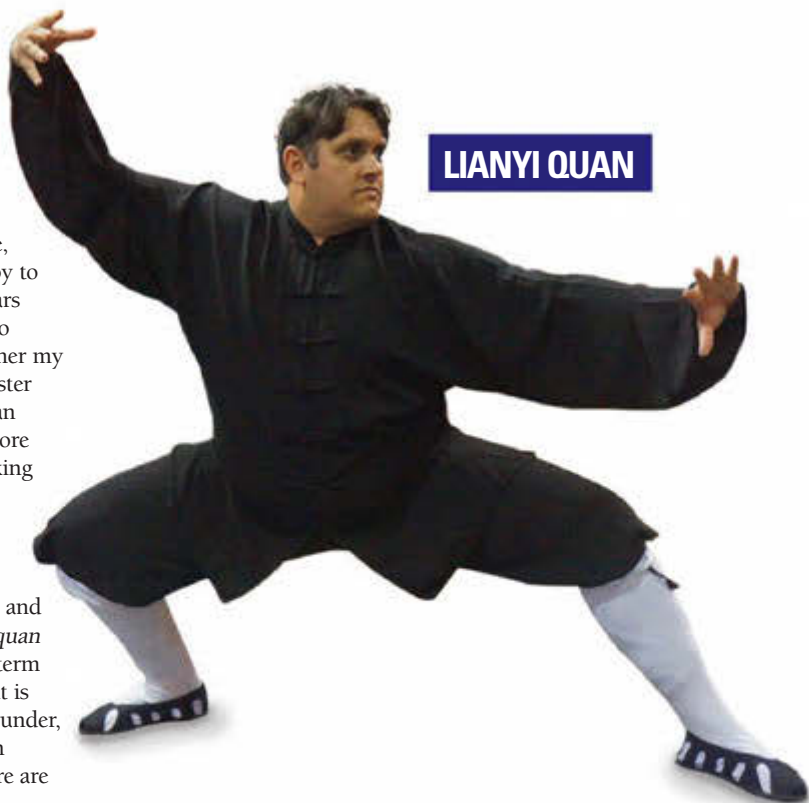
At that time there were only three authentic schools in the area: two were in Shi Yan, the city at the base of the mountain, and the other on Wudang Mountain itself, at the Purple Cloud Temple. The training was hard and the conditions poor, yet spirits were robust and the surroundings exhilarating. Grandmaster Zhong Yun Long had a deep and masterful voice and his movements were like that of a swimming dragon — I knew I had arrived at someplace enchanting and special.

As a keen researcher of traditional wushu and representative of the Shaolin Temple in Australia, I felt it was important to

go and experience China's other most renowned style of kung fu. It was an eye-opening experience, and one I continue to enjoy to this day. For almost 20 years I have regularly returned to Wudang Mountain to further my knowledge with Grandmaster Zhong and the Wudang San Feng Pai family, and for more than 15 years I've been taking Shaolin students with me.

As with most Chinese martial arts, the origins of the Wudang style are wrapped in ancient stories and fables; however, Wudang *quan* (literally fist, the Chinese term for a combat method), as it is known, is linked to one founder, Zhang San Feng. Although historians contest that there are

LIANYI QUAN



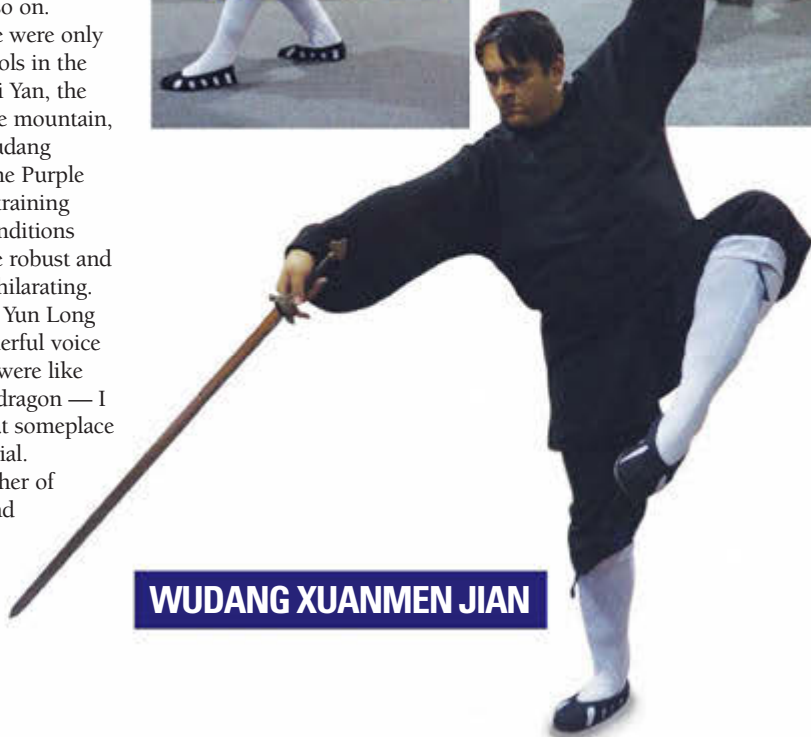
BAGUA ZHANG



SHUANG SHOU JIAN



WUDANG XUANMEN JIAN



two significant Zhang San Fengs in different periods of Chinese history, the Wudang San Feng Pai believe that Zhang San Feng was born Zhang Jun Bao in Liao Dong during the late Yuan dynasty. A dedicated practitioner of martial arts throughout his life, Zhang visited many ancient temples to learn from the best. Yet, although he was an avid student of martial arts and Taoism, he wished to live a life of solitude, in the freedom of nature. After many years of travel, he settled a while in Jin Tai Temple in Bao Ji, where he

YANGSHENG GONG



QI GONG



BAGUA DAO



GRANDMASTER ZHONG STATES,
“One created two, two
created three, three created
ten thousand.”

THIS PHILOSOPHY IS THE
FOUNDATION OF WUDANG AND THE
THREE CONCEPTS.



A Wudang
priestess

was accepted by the respected Taoist Huo Long as a disciple. He became passionate about Taoism and renamed himself San Feng, which means heaven and earth (when in relation to the Bagua philosophy). After further travels, he settled in Wudang Mountain for further cultivation. It is said that while watching a snake fight off a crane, he was inspired to develop a new style of kung fu known as Neijia quan (internal martial arts). By fusing his training in wushu, knowledge of Taoist internal ‘alchemy’, and the life-nourishing qi gong, Zhang San

Feng created Neijia quan, which would later be called the Taiji quan 13 method. Taiji quan 13 became the foundation of all forms of the Wudang style, often referred to as Taoist kung fu or Daoist kung fu.

The Wudang San Feng Pai (*pai* meaning sect or lineage), continues the traditions begun by Zhang San Feng and the teachings of his successive followers to this day. Wudang wushu is based upon the principles of Infinity (Yi Wu Ji), Supreme Ultimate (Tai Ji), and Two Extremes (Liang Yi).

Over the years, the

combining of these principles has seen a diverse range of styles develop and flourish around the world. Some of the most renowned styles found on Wudang Mountain are bagua zhang (eight trigrams palm), Xingyi quan (form and intention fist), Liangyi quan or Taiyi quan (two extremes fist), Xuangong quan (dark gate fist), Baxian (eight immortals style), Fuhu quan (taming the tiger fist) and many more.

Wudang kung fu is one of only two main streams of Chinese martial arts (the other being from Shaolin) and is famous for its ability to utilise softness or yin power to overcome hardness. Although it is recognised for the use of this theory, it does have and uses external power also, as this is the balance of all things in nature as perceived in Taoist philosophy. Wudang forms appear soft and fluid on the outside, but internally there is power and solidity. Through the discipline of practising internal forms to

cultivate qi, the practitioner develops a very powerful internal system but on the outside maintains an appearance of softness and gentle movement.

Wudang quan is like a bolt of lightning in attack, exploding into the opponent when it connects. The use of *song jin* (relaxed force) and *fa jin* (explosive power) are just two of many dynamic skills found within the arsenal of Wudang techniques — the ability to move like a fish or a swimming dragon in and around an enemy, and to deliver internally charged strikes, makes Wudang wushu devastating in experienced hands. It may be beautiful in its movement, but its beauty conceals the immense power and martial skill for which Wudang has become famous over the centuries.

China and the world have long associated the Wudang style with its *jian* (straight sword) techniques. The *jian* has a strong connection to Taoist beliefs and is featured in its ceremonies and



BAGUA JIAN



TAIJI JIAN



HORSE HAIR WHIP

stories, often attached to deities and historical figures, so it is no surprise that Wudang became famous for its sword skill. Just as Shaolin is renowned for its staff, Wudang is renowned for its jian. Shuang Shou Jian, Ba Xian Jian, Xuanmen Jian, Taiji Jian and so many more sword styles are found within Wudang, but the sword style is just one branch on the broad tree known that is the Wudang style; its real focus

is on three key concepts of taiji, liangyi and wuji.

Most practitioners globally who practise the Wudang style only study the taiji aspect. But according to Taoist beliefs, from wuji arises taiji, from taiji arises liangyi. Liangyi then became sixiang, and then this created bagua, which is found within the *I-Ching (Book of Changes)*. Grandmaster Zhong states, "One created two, two created three, three created ten thousand." This philosophy is the foundation of Wudang and the three concepts.

When yin and yang are combined, they create balance, which is taiji. When you separate yin and yang, it is known as liangyi. Taiji is considered as the tao or way of life-nourishing culture, which has combined the methods of *tuna* (breathing methods), *daoyin* (stretching techniques), *caibu* (collecting and nourishing) and *hunyuan* (qigong).

At Wudang, the fundamentals are important and students develop the kicks, stances, strikes and methods of Wudang wushu through a tough and regimented process. Students are pushed to their limits in

Wudang Liang Yi Quan

1 As the opponent strikes, Patel captures the arm as he shifts back, going with the opponent's force...



2 ...and drops his weight to accelerate his opponent's momentum and draw him in...



...to redirect the energy back into his foe and deliver an explosive force (*fa jing*)...



...into the opponent's ribs and diaphragm that lifts him off his feet.

Broad Sword vs Spear



Sifu Patel demonstrates the initial preparation position with his leg drawn up and away from the spear, sword at the ready.



Master Jiang Fei in Nan Yan Palace



As the spear thrusts forward, Patel drops his sword away to the outside and parries...



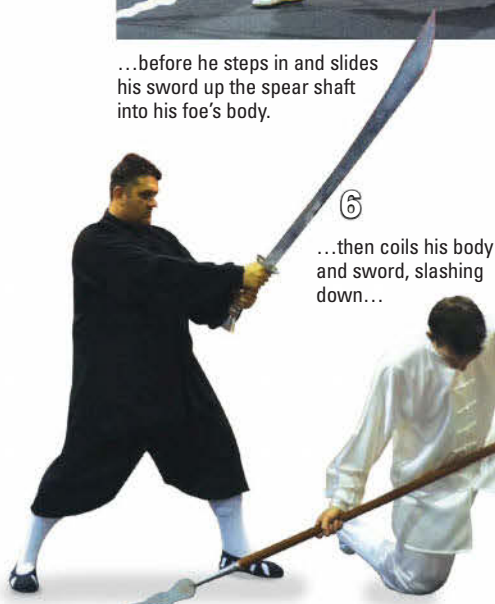
...and swings his rear foot away as he turns the sword over to press the spear down...



...before he steps in and slides his sword up the spear shaft into his foe's body.



Patel then turns again to sever the ligaments behind his enemy's knee...



...then coils his body and sword, slashing down...



...to end the battle.

the quest for excellence. The teacher, Grandmaster Zhong Yun Long, is the 14th-generation and current inheritor of Wudang Sanfeng Pai, and successor of two great Wudang Taoist masters and senior priests, Guo Gaoyi and Zhu Chengde. It's largely due to the dedication of Grandmaster Zhong and his disciples that Wudang wushu has grown not just in China but beyond its borders due to his efforts in passing on the essence of the art it has been featured in movies, TV series and magazines across the world.

Zhong's commitment to maintaining the quality Wudang wushu is evident with only about 20 students at a time studying at his school in Wudang Mountain. When I asked why he doesn't have a big school like in Shaolin, Grandmaster Zhong responded, "I have been offered by both government and private groups to teach masses of students in amazing, first-class facilities, but I believe that a small group within the heart of the Wudang Mountains creates unsurpassed quality...and then they may pass on these teachings elsewhere, hence the spread of Wudang and its culture continues."

It's very hard to say how many Wudang-born lineages exist today due to generations of masters having created their own styles over the centuries. Today their variety is extensive, but the Wudang Zhang San Feng Pai is considered the main stream of the style. The Wudang San Feng Pai comprise eight men (gates): Taiji, Xingyi (form mind), Bagua (eight trigrams), Baji (eight extremes), Baxian (eight immortals), Xuangong (mystic work), Liuhe (six harmonies) and Jiugong (nine directions). It's the three main concepts, liangyi, taiji and wuji, that are most important to a practitioner of Wudang wushu, not just the forms. Not only are these concepts found within the forms, they are the philosophies of daily life. Wudang Taoist culture is expressed not only in martial arts, but also in learning qigong, nourishing one's life for vitality and longevity, and being in balance with nature — with the ultimate aim of having a positive influence in the world.

After all my years of study, Wudang wushu remains both enchanting and difficult — however, I did discover that the stories of Wudang versus Shaolin were false and deeply rooted in a movie-fed folklore view of China's history, which at times had a Buddhist influence and at other times a Taoist influence. The fact that Zhang San Feng had studied in Shaolin also weakens the myth.

In reality, wushu, regardless of style, unites us all and is a means to pursue balance within all realms. ■

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KARATE'S MASTER COACH

An interview with Shihan George Barounis

Sydney's Shihan George Barounis, 8th Dan, has seen and done a lot in his 45 years of karate training — enough, in fact, to earn a reputation as one of Australia's top sport karate coaches as well as gaining a master rank in the International Karate Organisation Goju Ryu, headed by Barounis' Japanese teacher, Grandmaster Gonnohyoue Yamamoto. Having established his Miyagi Kan Go Ju-Ryu Karate Do dojo in 1976, Barounis now runs more than 10 clubs, presides over the NSW Karate Federation, coaches the AKF's elite squad in both kumite and kata, and has produced a world champion in Kristina Mah. He spoke to *Blitz* about what he's learned along the way.

INTERVIEW BY BEN STONE & ZACH BROADHURST

Shihan, why did you decide to travel to Japan to train initially? What did you feel was lacking in what you were learning here in Australia in the late 1960s and early '70s?

At the time I went to Japan I had been training for almost five years and I was also running a dojo for my sensei. I had a friend who was a Green-belt who went to Japan for six-to-eight weeks and when he came back I noticed that his *kihon* [basics] and kata was better than ours — better than our Brown-belts' and Black-belts'.

My instructor approached me one day and told me he wanted me to go for another grade, so I asked him "Is there anything else you can teach me before I go for it?" because I always like to be

prepared and technically ready. His answer was, "You're not going to tell me how to run my business," so I said, "Okay then, I'm not going to continue training here."

I decided to go to Japan and develop my karate, because I went to another dojo and saw the same thing. At that time in Australia we didn't have a very high standard of instructors, so I went to Japan and never looked back.

There was always a lot of mystique and reverence surrounding Grandmaster Gogen Yamaguchi. How did you find training under him, and were you treated any differently as a Westerner then?

I stayed at Grandmaster Yamaguchi's dojo, because he had rooms above his dojo and I was training there four times

a week. At that time he wasn't teaching karate; I was training with all his instructors. With Yamaguchi I was only doing yoga on Saturdays.

When I went to Japan I aimed to be respectful and humble — I am naturally a shy and reserved individual. I think the Japanese instructors took a liking to me because of these traits. On the other hand, there were some Westerners who were loud and spoke back to the instructors. These Westerners were frowned upon and had to continuously do *jiyu kumite* (free sparring) against the best in the dojo.

What was a typical day's training — and living — like in your time there?

When you are away from home and you have to train twice a day for two-and-a-half to three hours — that was

difficult for me. Also in those days when you do kumite the Japanese always want to be the speedier one and if you touch them they are going to hit you back; if you don't touch them they are going to think you're not good enough — that was hard and I couldn't understand why it was like that. In the beginning, I was holding back to show respect to the dojo. After a month, I improved and gained more confidence but still continued to show more restraint and respect to the higher grade instructors.

You continued to visit Japan regularly after that time. Why is it important to keep up regular visits to the honbu? Is it simply because that's where the best and most experienced teachers are based, or is it more than that?



I always like to be updated and learn as much as I can. Even now I still go to all the seminars and get all I can get. That's why I went to Japan — I wanted to be the best that I could be as an instructor. I also went back because I wanted to see my sensei and I'm still with him because of my loyalty. I like to be with my sensei and train and talk to each other about karate.

In Australia it was hard to go to different seminars in those days, so I continued to go to Japan. Sensei Yamamoto would send me to visit other dojos, seek out other instructors and train with them.

Ultimately you became a student of Yamamoto Shihan and joined his organisation. How did that come about and what was it about the direction of Yamamoto's karate that influenced your decision to go with him away from Goju Kai?

My original sensei I trained under in Australia was affiliated with Sensei Yamamoto. For me it was just a natural path to take because when I travelled to Japan, Yamamoto had already broken from Goju Kai in 1974. He had already developed his IKO and created that when I went there.

The IKO Goju organisation seems, to the outsider, to have less of a sporting focus than some other Japanese Goju systems that have come from the same roots — is that the case?

When I went over there for the first years we used to compete and we even had a team that would compete in Japan. I'm not sure why Yamamoto moved his focus and didn't do competitions anymore, I never asked. But when I first got there we trained and competed.

How did you feel about this shift in direction, having a strong sport-karate focus yourself?

I had no problem with this shift as SoShihan Yamamoto had no problem with my focus on sport karate. In saying that, only five-to-seven per cent [of students] are involved with competition karate. Sport karate is only a small part of Miyagi Kan karate, and all athletes participate in traditional karate classes.

You have a stellar record as a sport karate coach, instructing the AKF team, and with your student Kristina Mah having won a WKF world championship. Based on your own experience, what makes a good sport karate coach?

Having an open mind and always being willing to learn. You've got to be able to gain the trust of the athletes and meet their needs. When I watch the fights, I look at my athletes to find the mistakes they make and try to help correct those mistakes. When you compete at the highest level, like the world championships, you have to look at the top athletes in the world and see what they are doing and why they are so good and use that to teach your own athletes.

You've got to be able to analyse to see the level of our athletes and compare them with those athletes. Because Australia is so far from the other countries, it's very hard for us because we don't see enough. For Europeans it's much easier, but for us it's hard because we only compete once or twice a year in Europe or at the Worlds.

You have to travel and see top-level competition to become a better coach.

Do these same traits or skills apply equally to teaching self-defence or budo karate in your opinion?

Absolutely — both complement each other. When you are teaching budo or self-defence, you are there to teach your students how to be the best at that [skill set] and when you are in competition, you



World champ
Kristina Mah

have different classes but you are training them on how to be the best at that also.

How do you, as a teacher, treat the aspects of 'sport and street' within your schools — are they completely separate but perhaps complementary streams, or are they one and the same, blended together?

The training aspects of sports karate and street karate are different. When you do sports karate, it's against just one other person, but in the streets and in self-defence you might end up against multiple people attacking you — they are very different situations. They are not the same thing, so you have to teach them differently.

With sport karate we have specialised classes to cater for elite athletes, the main focus of which is to be quick and explosive in order to score points and win matches. Most importantly, we train to work within the rules that are set. With regards to street self-defence, the aim is to simulate

real life and unexpected situations, and be able to protect oneself at all times, therefore there are no rules.

With so many dojos under your direction, is it difficult to ensure the right balance of these aspects is maintained across the board in training, or do you let the instructors in your organisation manage that according to their own preferences?

I don't find it difficult. Our senior instructors come together on a regular basis and ensure the aspects of each dojo are at the same level.

There is always a lot of debate about kata being either a purely practical training device, which can only be judged on whether the techniques practised then work on a resisting opponent (the old way), or being a performance-based art that is judged mainly on visual merit (the modern, sporting way). Can kata ever be both these things to a practitioner at the same time?

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Yes, they can. I've taught both these things to all of my athletes over the years. When we are training for competition, I believe kata is always better when they have an understanding of the tactical *bunkai* [combat applications] of the kata. If they have an understanding of bunkai, they are better, stronger competitors.

Over the years, kata are often changed by those at the head of the various karate organisations, sometimes for (visual) performance enhancement, others possibly due to differing interpretations of the practical application. Have you experienced this? And is there ever a clash between the technical ideals of the IKO Goju and those of the sport's governing bodies in this area?

I have experienced this and I have made slight changes to some katas over the years because of the rule changes of the competition. When compulsory kata came in, we had to introduce Shitei kata, so some of the kata I had to make little changes to because it was a compulsory kata and they had to do it in a certain way.

How does making changes to a kata for competition affect your teaching of its bunkai? And are you happy to make such changes or would you prefer they weren't necessary?

The slight changes or variations we have made to certain kata in our school have not affected our teaching of bunkai; however, it can be and is interpreted in many different forms of bunkai. For example, *gedan barai* (lower block) can be used [against] either a block or a kick. I would prefer not to have made changes and as the current rules of kata competition state, "variations as taught by the contestant's school are permitted".

What are the positive effects that sport karate has had on karate as a whole in your opinion?



Tsuneari Yahiro, one of Miyagi Kan's top fighters

The positive effect of sports karate is being part of a sporting team and a sort of 'sporting family'. It's also very physical and good for your health, and gives the benefits that come with that. Sports karate has also been taught in a more efficient way and improved over hundreds of years. It is good, but it's not for everyone, and we have to understand that.

And the negatives, if any, on the 'traditional' side of karate?

There are no negatives, as long as you have a good understanding and teach it the proper way.

What do you think of the push for karate in the Olympics? Is it a worthwhile endeavour and does it still have legs?

I am in support of karate being in the Olympics. When you look at the sports that are currently included, I think karate must be there too — I hope one day we see karate there.

Finally, please tell us about your family's involvement in karate. Is it important to you that you are able to share your passion with family, and how is it different to teaching a member of your family to a regular student?

I never found it difficult to teach a family member — it was very easy for me to teach my family. All of my children practise karate and they teach in dojos, have competed at a state level, national level and a world level. My daughter competed at a state and national level and my son competed in two senior world championships.

My wife never practised but was always supportive of me when I travelled a lot in Japan. She would encourage me to go to Japan and train, and would say, "If you like karate and you get involved in it so much, if you have to go to Japan then go to Japan. Don't just stay here and get frustrated!" ■

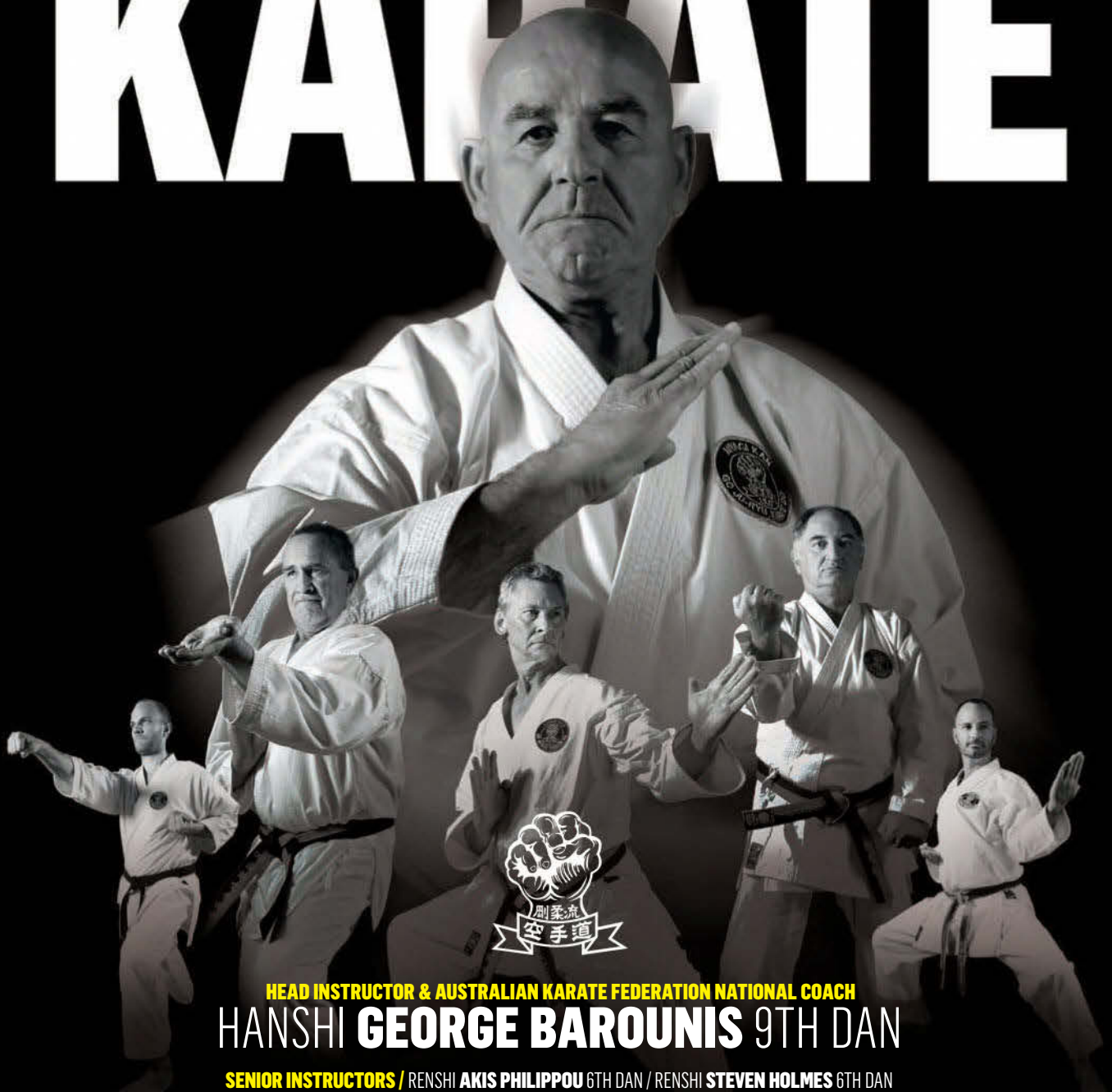
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Barounis with his sensei, So-Shihan Yamamoto

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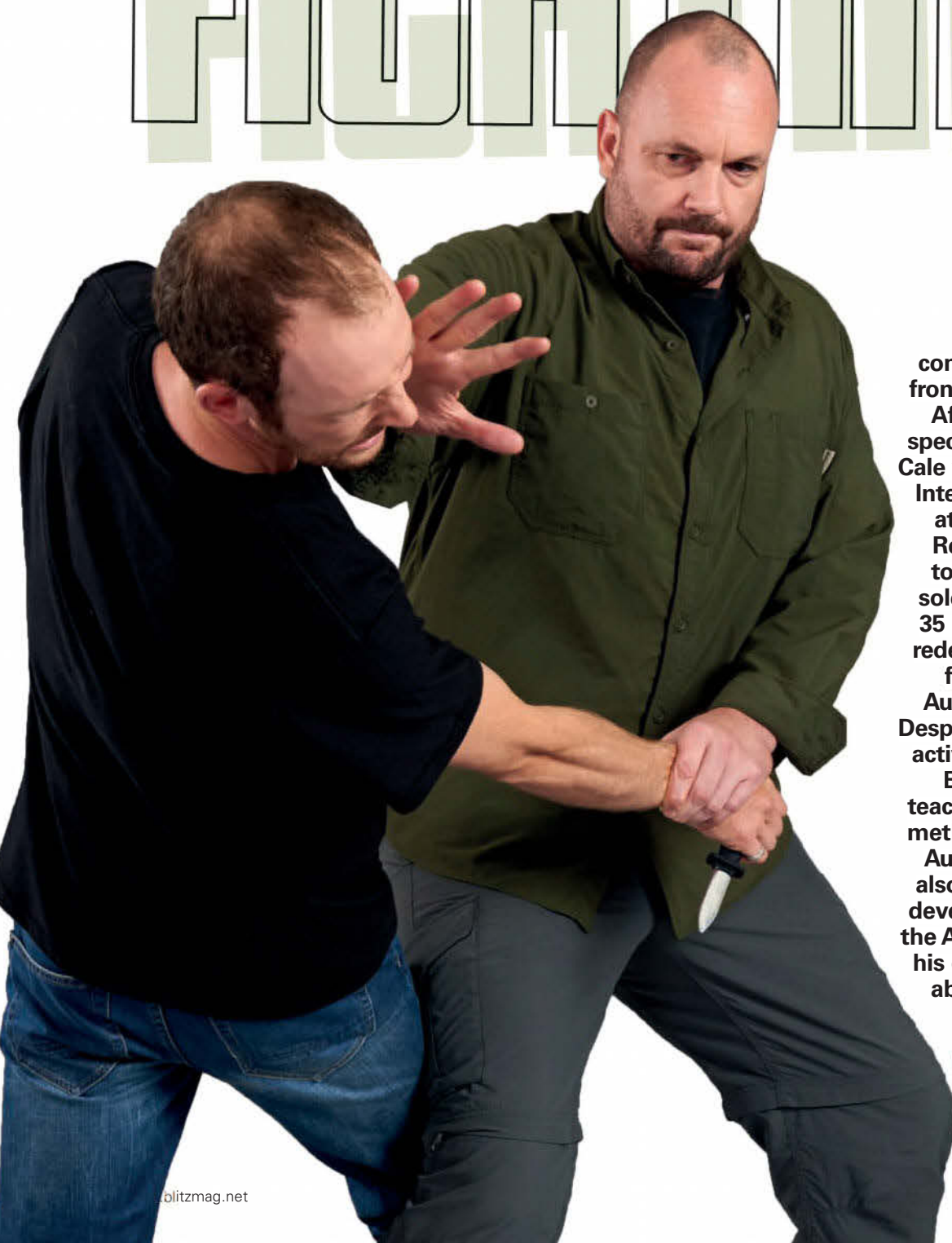
KINETIC FIGHTING

PART 2

**An interview
with Paul Cale**

After 20 years as a commando and surviving front-line action in Iraq and Afghanistan, Australian special forces sergeant Paul Cale was put in charge of the Integrated Combat Centre at the 2nd Commando Regiment. His mission: to apply his 25 years of soldiering experience and 35 years in martial arts in redeveloping close-quarter fighting methods for Australian special forces. Despite recently retiring from active service, the multiple Black-belt holder still teaches his Kinetic Fighting method to SF units and the Australian Infantry while also using its principles to develop combat athletes at the AIS. Here, Cale continues his conversation with *Blitz* about his methods and mindset.

INTERVIEW BY BEN STONE
STUDIO IMAGES BY
CHARLIE SURIANO



Paul, last issue you spoke about how you teach your Kinetic Fighting system with a focus on self-sufficiency, whether it's to civilians or military. How does your approach and the skill set differ between teaching Special Forces and Infantry soldiers?

I always work off people's primary skill sets. So, a soldier's primary skill set is shooting, it's their rifle, so I don't try to change that — I want to make it more effective. If I talk in the language of the gun to a soldier, they pick things up very quickly, so that's what I do.

From there, I show how they can quickly and easily, as a team,

become more capable and less lethal — meaning their ability to apply effective non-lethal techniques is enhanced, while they maintain the ability to go lethal if necessary. The training actually helps potentially lethal operators have a plausible less-than-lethal option.

Infantry guys may not carry a pistol, for instance, whereas SF guys will carry a pistol and do a change-over [from weapon to weapon], so straight away that changes some of the things I do with my training. The same principles are used, but how far we go and the way I leverage off their core skills differs. If they are mostly a CQB [close-quarters battle] unit, I'm going to leverage off

their CQB training. If their training is mostly infantry style, then I'm going to use that.

That's how I can work well with Americans or anyone else, because I look at their training and fit into what they already have. That's what I've done with civilians: instead of going, 'Here is my new martial art, come and learn it', I say, 'You've invested the time and effort into something that you love, so it's better to make that effective, rather than to take up something that you have little experience in.'

And does this hold true for civilian martial artists too?

The beauty of having six [different] Black-belts is that,

while I may not be qualified in a particular martial art, I guarantee that the techniques used by that martial art I will have seen before and can work with them.

Through my work at the AIS [Australian Institute of Sport], I've also had dealings with basketball and cycling, and my particular expertise is now linking into non-contact sports, because people realise I'm talking about mindset — and that's something that can be applied to anything. From those sports, I then get exposure to a bunch of things that feed back to the tactical operator and combat athlete.

You've also recently been working with the Sydney

IMPROVISED DEFENCE TOOLS



In this scenario, Cale is grabbed while trying to de-escalate a confrontation. Having had his hand casually in his pocket at the ready...

...Cale immediately draws his steel pen from his pocket and follows the path of least resistance...

... dropping in low and jabbing his improvised weapon into his opponent's groin/inner thigh area as he secures a hold on the opposite wrist.



Exploiting his attacker's natural physical response of withdrawal, Cale continues driving forward with a headbutt...

...clearing the way to follow with another pen strike up high as necessary, or, if it meets resistance...

...folding the arm over into an elbow strike to the head instead...

...and making way to bring the neck/head under control with the pen.

KNIFE DEFENCE: STATIC THREAT



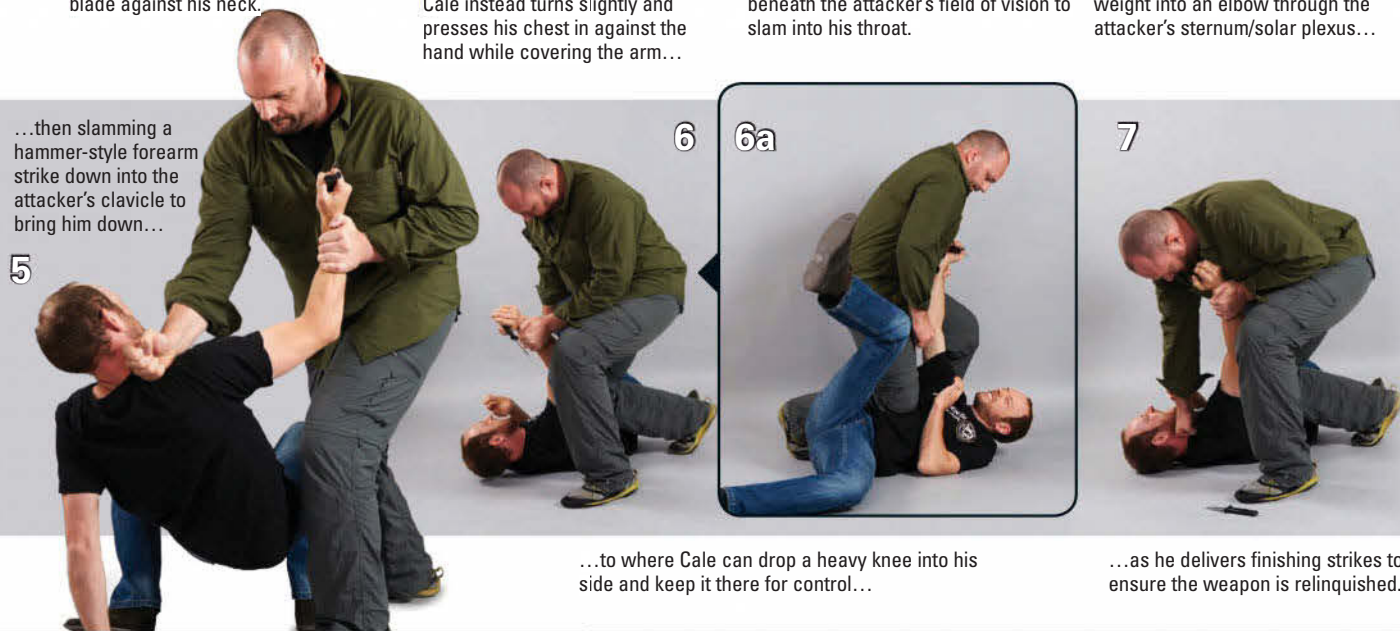
In this scenario, Cale is being held at knife point, with the attacker's blade against his neck.

Since the attacker is expecting him to move away from the knife, Cale instead turns slightly and presses his chest in against the hand while covering the arm...

...as his other hand shoots forward simultaneously, coming up from beneath the attacker's field of vision to slam into his throat.

Tightly gripping the knife arm, Cale continues forward, dropping his weight into an elbow through the attacker's sternum/solar plexus...

...then slamming a hammer-style forearm strike down into the attacker's clavicle to bring him down...



...to where Cale can drop a heavy knee into his side and keep it there for control...

...as he delivers finishing strikes to ensure the weapon is relinquished.

Opera House security team, can you tell us a little about that?

That started out with them wanting to be involved in Kinetic Fighting for dealing with extreme violence, but also how to better operate as a team and be more effective against violence with a non-lethal capability that is appropriate for security so that people aren't being belted around and damaged.

These guys are very experienced, they are high-end security and very good at what they do, and the feedback from that course has been phenomenal...it changes their thinking and they realise how

many areas [the training] can fit into, so now I'm consulting on a whole range of areas with the Sydney Opera House.

You mentioned that the security team attached to the iconic venue had an opportunity to implement the KF skills taught on your course in an incident that occurred in one of the attached bars shortly after. Can you tell us how that played out?

Two days later, they had an incident there; the training had changed the way they looked at things and so they implemented it straight away. It linked to what they knew already and what they understood, and

they were open to it, so they said it went like clockwork. It was all captured on their huge network of cameras: the guy was uninjured, quickly arrested and escorted off. Going from an extremely violent hit-out — he just went from zero to 100 instantly — they immediately shut him down and had him on his way. It looked appropriate and it didn't put people at risk.

I can train a group to deal with someone who is armed, while they are unarmed. You would ideally have someone who is armed supporting them — as a failsafe if something goes horribly wrong — but you can have that less-than-lethal capability. The thing is,

it requires a lot of training. The more you don't use firearms, the more you don't use those lethal capabilities, the higher the level of your training needs to be.

So you have governments and boards demanding that their security is appropriate and using minimum force, yet the training could be completely useless or inappropriate. It's the same as psychiatric hospitals, where nurses get busted up, punched, and they are wondering why. They just don't have the skills and training to be more effective in that environment.

To give that training is better for public safety; it's better for the government, it's

better for the groups that are in charge, because they are getting exactly what they want — they just have to be devoted to empowering their guys to achieve what they want them to do.

'Non-perishable skill' is the ideal outcome of any training and I understand KF is designed to deliver that...how so?

It's about minimising technique and understanding core principles, and that is what you memorise — you just keep working with it, practising and applying it. You can apply those concepts to your daily life, you can apply it to any martial art training; anything you are doing you can apply it to, so you just keep practising and developing that methodology.

If I teach you 20 techniques, you've probably forgotten the first 16 when we are finishing up on the last four, so it's perishable skill — you haven't even left the seminar and it's already gone. However, I spent only three hours with the Sydney Opera House guys and they are now, as a team, applying those principles for real just days later.

When teaching civilian courses, how do you translate in practical terms those key military-oriented Kinetic Fighting concepts of primary weapon protection and use. Do people need to be willing to adopt a mindset and practise of utilising improvised/legal weapons to make it work?

You can do it without weapons. Security guys do it without weapons, but what they do is they replace weapons with having a team. In other words, everyone in their team knows the same things; they know how to operate effectively as a unit, and that replaces the weapons that are needed. As an individual, you are on your own. You can choose to arm yourself or not — and if you have an extensive background in combat sports or martial arts,

Cale on patrol with the 2nd Commando Regiment in Afghanistan



"PEOPLE KNOW THAT IF OTHER PEOPLE WISH TO BE ARMED AND COMMIT HORRIFIC AND VIOLENT CRIME, THEY WILL DO IT AND OUR LAWS WON'T STOP THAT FROM HAPPENING."

you could probably determine whether you will get away with it in a given situation.

What I do isn't about an escalation of force; I don't teach people how to go through the use-of-force continuum [as followed by police, security, etc.] because the way that is applied is often completely wrong. I work with people to deal with extreme violence — when it's time to use it, you will not need to sit back and wonder whether to apply what I'm teaching you. If you think that this is about how to deal with someone when you are drunk at the pub, having a little 'alpha male' confrontation, you're in the wrong course. I'm here for when a guy has just walked in, stabbed a fella in

the chest and now he's looking at you.

Does the Aussie attitude to weapons, and in particular the general lack of familiarity with guns, make 'selling' some of your concepts difficult?

No, it's actually the opposite, because the law doesn't change people's mindset or sense of vulnerability. The law says we can't have guns, but everyone knows the bad guys have guns — there are shootings in Sydney every other week. We had Man Monis walking through the Lindt Café with his shotgun — even though he's on bail for murder, he's got a shotgun. Here we have a guy who has not just popped up from nowhere; he's known to

our intelligence services and to police, he's been involved in criminal behaviour and yet he got himself an illegal, pump-action shotgun and walked into a café.

People know that if other people wish to break the law and be armed, and commit horrific and violent crime, they will do it and our laws won't stop that from happening.

How different is the approach to teaching it in the USA, then, given the social and legal differences regarding gun use there?

What people ask from me in the US is different, it tends to be about having a gun, but they realise that if they can't shoot it straight or they can't access it, then that tool is useless.

It depends what state you are in, but Americans usually have a better understanding of how to make a firearm safe, what a firearm does, what it is capable of and so forth. With the Lindt Café incident, for example, people didn't know what that weapon could do, and this gave [the perpetrator] too much power. For example, not understanding that when he's reloading it, that's probably a good time to do something. People are informed by TV and movies, so their understanding of a gun is what Arnold Schwarzenegger does with one — that's just not reality.

You've got to quickly understand where the threat is. Let's get over the fact that someone has a gun, now let's work out what the situation is.

On a similar subject, while others were enjoying a quiet Easter break, you were making a citizen's arrest of a guy who kicked in the door of a café — can you tell us about that incident and the outcome?

It was just a drunk guy who was a bit violent and carrying on, and decided to kick a door in. An older [retired] police officer decided that wasn't good enough and I decided to back him up and we arrested him. It was no big deal, I just

think you need to be part of the solution in society, don't just sit back and wait for the most violent thing to happen. I'm always watching my surroundings, I'm always aware of what's going on. I was watching this guy because of his behaviour, and next minute he needed to be shut down. If you shut down someone quickly like that...he ended up complying, realising he was in a situation with no out, and the police arrived quickly and dealt with it. The thing is, we potentially stopped that from escalating. Acting on things like this is what people should do — but you can only do that if you have confidence.

What was interesting was the behaviour in the café: everyone was basically hiding and staff were staying back and not going near the door. Even when we arrested the guy, they were just looking on and I said, "What you should do now is phone the police," and they were like, "But, but..." I had to say, "Shut up, get on the phone, call the police, say 'An arrest as been made, police required' — do that now."

That's the other thing, too: people need leadership. So when they are overwhelmed by something, you also have to treat it like it's nothing so that you can keep your mind 'in the black' and direct people

around you who are looking for a leader. Everyone looks for a leader during a crisis and it's a matter of not waiting — if no one is putting their hand up, you've got to be the one.

Why do you think it is that nobody there had any clue of just the basic right action, like calling for help?

I think it comes to the whole process of asking, 'Am I justified? Am I in the right?' As soon as your brain has to justify behaviour, it's too slow — shit happens instantly. It's something I teach in my course and all I did that night was apply it. I live by my training, I don't say, 'Hey everyone, do this' and then

I do something completely different. I train people in how I think and operate through my own experiences.

Whether teaching civilians or soldiers/cops, do you find that students with a martial arts background tend to be helped or hindered in the learning process by their prior experience?

I'd say helped. I think having a martial arts background is positive and while I could say to you that certain martial arts are probably more helpful than others, I wouldn't, because really what you see in MMA is this: tell a martial art that it's crap and

KNIFE VS KNIFE



In this scenario, Cale is facing an attacker brandishing a knife but is also carrying his own concealed blade, such as issued to soldiers.

Accepting he may be cut, Cale's tactic is to 'give' his free arm out to draw the attacker's blade out...



...simultaneously drawing his own blade and clearing its path to the target.

Cale aims not to grab at the knife arm (and risk severe injury such as severed fingers) but to guide/block it...

...just as is sufficient to enter and strike as he follows it back to its origin.

Only after diminishing the attacker's capability does Cale then look to seize the knife arm and take out his base.

someone from that art will turn up to show you it's not!

There are definitely martial arts that are more suited, but rather than me saying which ones they are, I'd rather people understand that anything will work if you're willing to apply it, and understand the timing, tempo and when to apply it. For example, we've had (Lyoto) Machida show that karate can work in MMA. He's made the effort to understand what other people do, their muay Thai and BJJ, but his thing was to get out there and show people that Shotokan can work.

It's the wrong thing to tell people that what they are doing doesn't work; it's the right thing to show them how to make it work.

Due to its Hollywood-backed promotion as much as its respected (Israeli) military origins, krav maga has become by far the world's most practised and well-known reality-based self-defence (RBSD) or civilian 'combatives' method. Obviously it now ranges from programs helmed by experienced veterans of battle to those who are a generation or two removed from that and may have diluted the system for franchise purposes. Having trained with representatives of various branches of that system and developed

your own system with real weapons and fellow elite soldiers, what's your opinion on the krav maga of today?

I have a lot of krav maga guys do my training. I think they understand their own weaknesses as well as their strengths — any good martial artist should know their limitations and should be seeking knowledge and information. So I give credit to those guys for coming along to have a look at what's going on. I tend to find they are up for anything that is like what they are doing, to verify what they are doing.

I would say your statement at the end there is pretty much on the money; it comes down to the source of the training. It's like martial arts; if you are training with the guy who created it, with the guy who developed krav maga, you start to develop not only appreciation of why they apply certain techniques, but also of their motivation. If their motivation is instead to create something that is a marketing bonanza, then all you need is to understand that. I'm not saying that's the reason for krav maga, I'm saying you have to understand people's motivations — what is their core objective? That is going to basically determine the direction they take with what they are doing.

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WEAPON RETENTION: PISTOL



To illustrate potential weapon-retention issues, Cale is demonstrating a tactically unsound position, holding his pistol too close to his adversary.

Effecting a commonly taught pistol defence, his foe suddenly and simultaneously drops below the line of fire while forcing the gun upward with both hands...



...to which Cale responds by dropping his own weight as he folds his elbow down to strike into the top of his foe's head...

...then he turns on the outside, taking his gun hand back as he simultaneously uses his other hand to capture his opponent's near elbow...



...and drive his arm away from the pistol, which Cale withdraws to his hip, firing if need be.

Nothing replaces experience. There is a reason why we go to seminars with world champions or coaches of world champions, because nothing replaces the experience of having done it — and people want that.

I just see krav maga as another martial art, where they train with more modern weapons. It's been turned into a modern-era martial art and I just recommend that those guys get exposure to everything and not stop learning...do what the combat sports guys do.

RBSD proponents often say that there's been too much focus on rank and lineage, or 'pedigree', in traditional martial arts, and a system should be judged on its merits — i.e. whether it can be practically

applied. However, given that proof of practical application requires taking the techniques outside the gym, is it fair to say that instructor pedigree — meaning specifically: familiarity with, or removal from, frontline experience — is even more important when it comes to RBSD systems?

I think if people talk about instructor pedigree and traditional martial arts focusing too much on it, that might be a reflection of their lack of pedigree. I have a background in traditional martial arts and in combat sports. I don't think of myself as reality-based self-defence, but if you're going to put me in a box, that would probably be the one. But I can also be put in the combat sports box and the martial arts

box, because I'm often asked to demo all sorts of things. I might go to an aikido school and show them how to use aikido in a more affective way, based on my experience and background. I see myself as a martial artist, a combat sportsman, a reality-based self-defence instructor and a military combat veteran.

So, I think it's wrong to get a part of the picture and say it's not needed to create the whole picture. Every little bit of ink and colour makes up the whole painting and it's just understanding how to mix it together — how to apply your craft to make the best possible outcome.

In the end, everything is created by a person, people are fallible and people have varied experiences, so just understand what it is you want to learn.

Can you explain the core principles of Kinetic Fighting, in so far as what makes it adaptable to the many different applications we've discussed?

Expect the worst and de-escalate as appropriate. If you expect the worst-case scenario, you'll find yourself always de-escalating any conflict. If you carry on with life, as most people do, not expecting anything to be a problem, then when something horrific happens there will be no considered response, because it hasn't even been thought of — it just becomes mayhem. You just become part of the problem, looking for a leader, rather than part of the solution. So, always expect the worst case and de-escalate where possible. ■

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A black and white photograph of two men in a close combat training exercise. The man on the left is wearing a black t-shirt and jeans, and the man on the right is wearing a dark button-down shirt and dark pants. They are both looking intensely at each other, with the man on the right having his arm around the man on the left's waist.

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Paul Cale is a former Special Forces Sergeant with 2 Commando Regiment and is a veteran of multiple combat tours. His Kinetic Fighting method is now the official program of Australia's elite SF soldiers & Infantry.

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TECHNIQUE WORKSHOP WITH ANTHONY LANGE



SCAN FOR
A VIDEO
LESSON WITH
ANTHONY
LANGE



Defence against a low roundhouse kick: Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu & MMA

IMAGES BY MIKLOS BEOTHY

ANTHONY LANGE

Professor Anthony Lange is a 3rd Degree Black-belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu and in 2015 is celebrating his 21st year of competing in the sport. He also fought in Australia and Japan as a professional MMA/vale tudo ('anything goes') fighter throughout the 1990s.

Last year saw Lange compete in the World Masters held in California and become the first Australian male to win gold as a Black-belt in the event. Lange has a series of firsts to his name: he established the first BJJ and MMA school in Sydney; he started Australia's first grappling tournament in 1994; he coached the first Australian to fight and win in the UFC, Elvis Sinocic. Over the years he has produced many champions in Brazilian jiu-jitsu and dozens of MMA cage champions.

Lange's enthusiasm, attention to detail and passion for martial arts are well known to those at his academy, including his fighting family, which consists of his "kick ass wife and sons, and a long list of instructors that have real experience in the competitive arena," says Lange, giving students a wealth of knowledge to draw on.

Q&A Anthony, how has your martial arts training changed you?

Martial arts has improved my life over many years physically, mentally, emotionally, financially and spiritually. At 51 in 2014, I was physically and mentally prepared enough to win the IBJJF [International Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Federation] World Masters Black Belt division. I have a sense of calmness that I didn't have in my younger years through the constant challenges and achievements afforded me through training and coaching. Martial arts has also taught me how to run a business; the same principles in learning martial arts can translate into dealing with business and personal finance — for example, moving towards a goal in a steadfast fashion and paying attention to detail, just to name a couple.

Oddly enough, a lifetime of struggle and fighting has given me an inner calm and a deeper understanding of the connection between myself, the environment and other humans.



As his opponent sets his feet and loads the rear leg for a low kick to the inside of Coach Lange's leading thigh...



...Lange switches stance, bringing his leg back and taking sting out of the low kick while simultaneously upsetting his opponent's balance with his left hand...



...then following immediately with an overhand right before his foe can regain his footing.



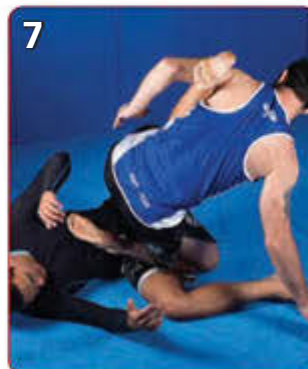
Lange uses the opportunity to drive in underneath for a single-leg pick-up...



...hoisting his opponent high (using his legs and a straight back)...



...to dump him to the floor. As his opponent lands, Lange strikes and simultaneously captures his foe's near leg with his left elbow.



Hooking the leg, Lange immediately spins through his opponent's legs...



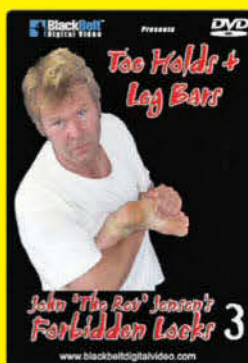
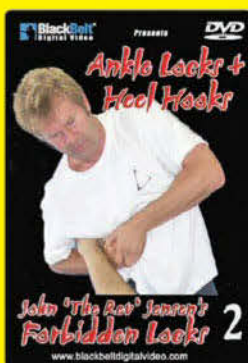
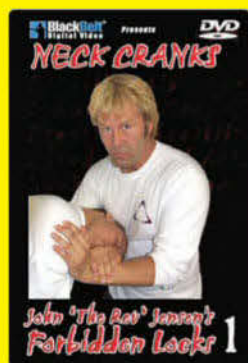
...and lies back to apply a knee-bar, secure the heel behind his armpit then squeezing his knees and lifting his hips to finish.



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TECHNIQUE WORKSHOP WITH JAMES WOODFIELD JONES



Defence against a low roundhouse kick:

Crazy Monkey Defense

JAMES WOODFIELD-JONES

James Woodfield-Jones is the director of training at CMD Australasia, vice president of Global Monkey Jits (CMD's Brazilian jiu-jitsu program) and a CMD Core Coach.

A full-time coach, Woodfield-Jones owns Crazy Monkey Defense Australia and is a Brazilian jiu-jitsu Black-belt under 8th Degree Coral-belt Rigan Machado and Rodney King, creator of the Crazy Monkey Defense program and 3rd Degree BJJ Black-belt.

Woodfield-Jones has been involved in martial arts since the age of five and has competed in submission wrestling, BJJ and MMA. In recent years he has enjoyed travelling around the globe and Australia coaching clients from all walks of life including security, military and police personnel, imparting the CMD doctrine of 'FUNCTIONality'.

"My focus is on keeping the 'FUNCTIONality' in martial arts while honouring the holistic view as using martial arts as a life skill to help clients better perform in life with our Crazy Monkey Defense program.

Q&A James, how has your martial arts training changed you?

My martial arts — Crazy Monkey Defense — has without a doubt taught me how to defend myself but more importantly it's made me a better person, father and husband, and allowed me to know who I am. Coaching and training in the Crazy Monkey Defense program each and every day teaches you many things; through movement and mindfulness, the lessons on the mat very quickly lead into everyday life, learning how to manage your emotions and problem-solve.

In today's busy life, many people are dealing with stress, be it in the workplace, home or otherwise. Going back to caveman days, your body had a natural defence system built in for stressful times hunting for food and just surviving every day. The body has natural chemical releases (in fight or flight) to protect us from real threat such as animals trying to kill you, but in this day and age, the threat is no longer surviving/fighting for food but road rage, arguing with the boss, etc. and with the same chemical releases, the body can trick you to think it's a real threat when in reality it's not. Learning to control your mind and body through movement and performance helps you manage yourself on and off the mats, teaching you to know yourself and learning to be present at every stage.

These are the lessons I strive to achieve with each and every one of my clients.



As the aggressor shapes up, James takes a 'bear stance' posture, keeping distance between himself and the aggressor while trying to defuse the situation.



As the aggressor throws a wild hook, James adopts a hunchback structure and keeps his eyes on the opponent as he blocks, grabbing the back of his head and tucking his neck in while shielding...



...then as the aggressor throws a low roundhouse kick, James shifts away...



...taking a step back with his lead leg to remove it from the line of fire.



As soon as the kick passes, James drives back in and fires a 'diving-board' jab...



...and follows with a diving-board cross to the offender's throat, ensuring he remains tight in structure as he fires his counter punches.



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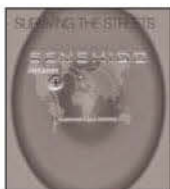
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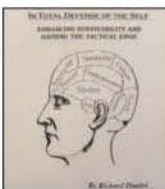
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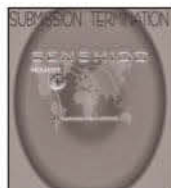
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TECHNIQUE WORKSHOP WITH MATTHEW WEYGOOD



Defence against a low roundhouse kick: Bujinkan Ninjutsu

IMAGES BY ANDRE STEFAN WHITE

MATTHEW WEYGOOD

Shidoshi Matthew Weygood (10th Dan) is the owner and founder of Bujinkan Ninjutsu Melbourne Dojos (BNMD) in Victoria.

Weygood Sensei began his training at Bujinkan Ninjutsu Australian Dojos (BNAD) under Shihan Darren Horvath (15th Dan) nearly 15 years ago, and travels to Japan several times each year to train with renowned Bujinkan grandmaster and chief instructor Masaaki Hatsumi Sensei, along with the top shihan from around the world. "[I go to] receive the direct transmission and feeling from Grandmaster Hatsumi," says Weygood. "I am continually looking to develop my own budo skills on a daily basis."

Weygood has been teaching Bujinkan at his own dojo and to various groups for 10 years, and more recently has run ninjutsu camps for prestigious schools.

Q&A **Matthew, in your opinion and experience, what are the most important elements of self-defence?**

On a recent trip to Japan, a female student asked one of the Japanese shihan how to get out of a position when someone has overpowered you and you are completely pinned. Sensei said: "At that point you may need to endure the situation, as you have missed the opportunities before that moment where you can 'avoid' the situation."

Self-defence, to me, is more about everything you can do to protect yourself before a physical confrontation. Being aware of the environment you are in, the people you are around and even more importantly the feeling or sense of the situation will be enough for you to consciously choose where to put yourself at any given point in time. This type of awareness will allow you to steer clear of nearly all dangerous situations. It is also important to be lucky — and training helps create luck.



As the attacker sizes up to him, Sensei Weygood maintains *zanshin* (combative awareness).



As his attacker enters with a low round kick, Weygood steps back with his right foot at 45 degrees (giving him distance and angle) while drawing the left leg back so the kick misses...



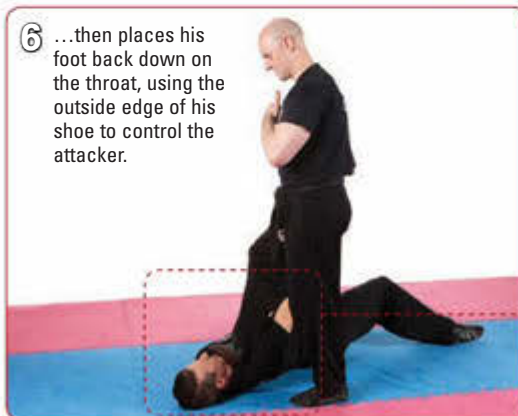
...exposing his foe's back so Weygood can step straight back in and stomp through the back of the opponent's near knee. He simultaneously seizes the attacker's near shoulder and arm...



...and turns his own body in by pulling his left leg back and around to hook behind his foe's leg while striking with a knife-hand to the attacker's neck.



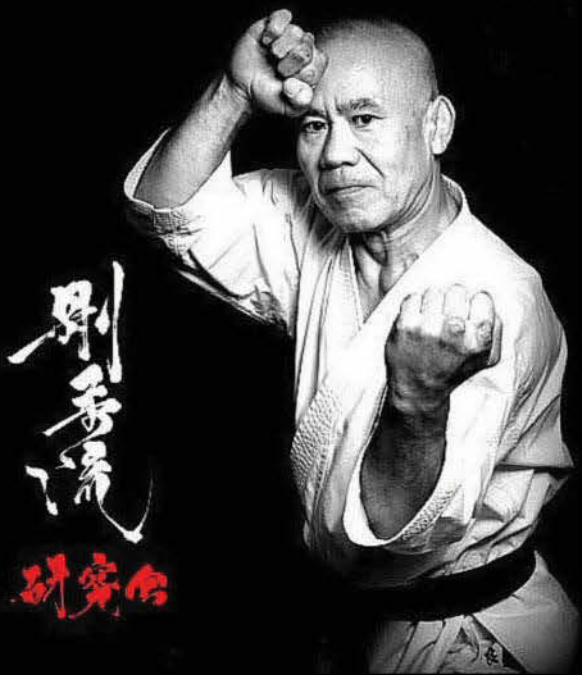
As the attacker falls, Weygood captures his near hand to control the arm and heel-kicks him to the jaw if necessary (note: a downward kick to the head in this position could cause deadly secondary impact with the ground)...



6 ...then places his foot back down on the throat, using the outside edge of his shoe to control the attacker.

FOOT POSITION





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of the term: it's about hitting, something with kinetic energy. When you're involved in a real confrontation, there is a very small chance that you are going to be injured — and severely or partially — and the kinetic energy means you are hitting something with force but not relying on the attributes of the body. For example, with civilian martial arts, where you are turning your hips and this and that, you need a fit, working body — but if a blade has gone across your arm, or you've lost one of the arm, you can't just stop and say, 'Well, that didn't work out well for me', while the fight is going on. You've got to be able to use your body without relying only on those specific attributes. So the term 'kinetic' is about

understanding that and how to hit with the [whole] body. The reasoning behind that has come from having a weapon and being in armed conflict, and using that momentum when closing to hit the enemy. I noticed how effective that was and applied it to teaching across the board. It's also a very effective way to be seen as using minimum force, because you're using the body's momentum to create that force instead of flying your hands around. The second reason for the name is that in the military, 'kinetic' is a term used to describe when a unit is actively engaged with the enemy — they've 'gone kinetic'. You have lamented in the past that close-combat programs utilised by militaries and their various

units were often created in an ad-hoc manner, or were simply a reflection of whatever martial arts styles were done by the instructors working on them. Has that changed to any great degree in the forces you work with, the ADF and US Military? As wars happen, expertise is reduced, so the level of access to the people who have done it for real keeps changing. When [Australian] commandos were learning to do hand-to-hand combat, they were learning off guys who were in the first Australian commando units, which were raised during World War Two. So, those guys had experience and they started teaching from experience. But then, if there is nothing going on and it is a peaceful time, the

guys who they train up don't have the personal experience themselves. So, the degrees of separation keep changing and when wars come around and people again have that experience and exposure, then [the system] regenerates — I think it's a cyclic thing. As far as the Australian military goes, the Australian Defence Force has been exposed to my training, both in Special Forces and now with the Infantry Core doing their Infantry Integrated Combat. It resonates with soldiers because it is completely about the reality of the battlefield, which is a truth you can't escape. When people speak to you in terms that are bedded in the truth — even if you don't have [battle] experience outside the training you've had with weapons and shooting — it resonates with you [as a soldier].

IMPROVISED WEAPON VS KNIFE



1 Facing a knife, Cale covers his vitals with his rear hand while accessing a pen from his top pocket.

2 Knowing he will be hit (meat and bone)



3 ...to give him contact with the weapon arm for control, and, most importantly, an opportunity to enter...

4 ...and

Attack



5 ...the assailant out of a debilitating injury to the knife hand.



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FIGHTING FIT

10 essential stretches for fighters

Let's be honest, stretching isn't the most fun. I would much rather kick pads, drill some armbars, swing a kettlebell and do anything else but stretch.

BY MATT D'AQUINO



1 Kneeling on your hands and knees, bring your head up as you arch your back downwards, gaining a stretch in the lower back.



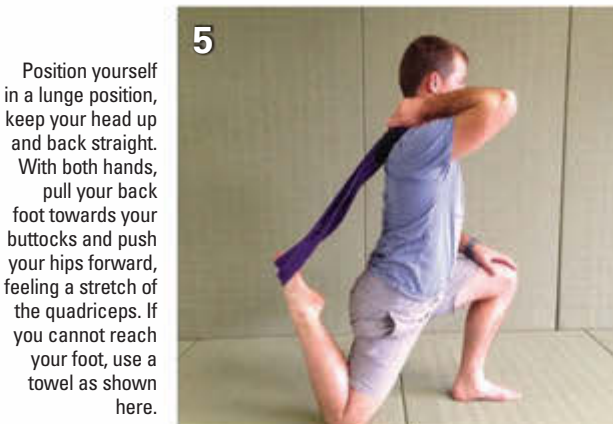
2 Kneeling on your hands and knees, bring your head down as you hunch your back upwards, feeling a stretch in the upper back.



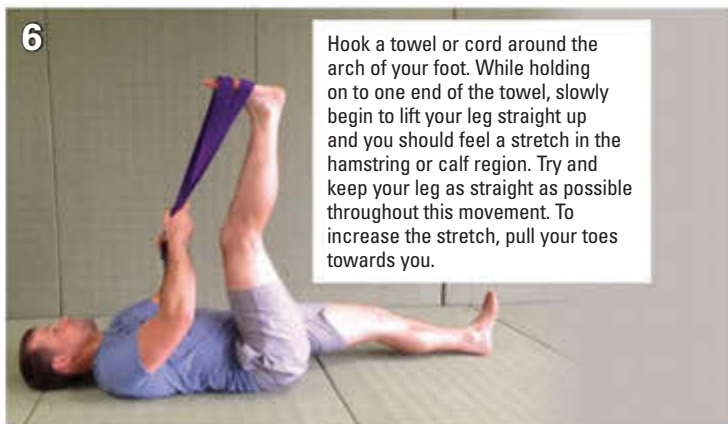
3 Sitting down with legs outstretched, cross your left leg over the other. With your right arm, push off the knee and attain a stretch of your back. You can do this stretch in both directions. Just keep your head up and back straight throughout the stretch.



4 Position yourself in a lunge position, keep your head up and back straight, push your hips forward, feeling a stretch of the hip flexors.



5 Position yourself in a lunge position, keep your head up and back straight. With both hands, pull your back foot towards your buttocks and push your hips forward, feeling a stretch of the quadriceps. If you cannot reach your foot, use a towel as shown here.



6 Hook a towel or cord around the arch of your foot. While holding on to one end of the towel, slowly begin to lift your leg straight up and you should feel a stretch in the hamstring or calf region. Try and keep your leg as straight as possible throughout this movement. To increase the stretch, pull your toes towards you.



7 While kneeling down, extend one hand to the side of you and push your shoulder downwards. You should feel a stretch in the chest and shoulder. To increase the stretch, simply raise your fingers towards the sky.



8 Simply point as far as you can with your right hand as you drop your head to the left. Try and keep your hand at the 90-degree mark for best results.



9 Hook a towel or cord around the arch of your foot. While holding on to one end of the towel, slowly begin lowering your foot to the floor. Hold it when you feel the stretch in your groin region.



10 Lie on your back with both legs straight. Pass your left leg as far as you can over your right leg without letting your left shoulder come off the ground. You shall feel a stretch in your glutes, middle and upper back.

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DRILL IT WITH RAYMOND DANIELS



Explode into Strikes

Ray Daniels, world-renowned karate fighter and now a star of the world's top full-contact kickboxing promotion Glory, knows a thing or two about explosiveness. Try this drill from his training arsenal.

THE TRAINER

Karate champion and elite kickboxer Raymond Daniels has been training in American Kempo and Shotokan karate since childhood. Having won eight straight National Blackbelt League point-karate titles in his homeland, he has also proved his skill in full-contact fighting, beginning with winning the 2007–08 MVP award in Chuck Norris' now defunct World Combat League. Daniels now stars in the world's top kickboxing promotion, Glory, based in Europe, and boasts a record of 24–2 in kickboxing having won his most recent fight — and many others — with his trademark spinning back kick. He travels the world to compete and conduct seminars, and recently ran a series of training workshops on Australia's east coast.

THE DRILL

This drill is fairly simple and can even be done on a punching bag or other stationary target if you don't have a partner to hold the focus mitts. The idea is that you perform an explosive on-the-spot conditioning exercise followed immediately by a change of direction and explosive leap into a strike such as a Superman-style punch, lunging jab or 'dive-bomb blitz' as is demonstrated here. Your strike should also take you past your opponent to where they can't easily counter strike.

The initial exercise can be either a full or partial burpee (partial being without

the push-up while in the plank position) followed by a vertical, full-stretch jump, or it can be simply a tuck-jump, for example. The leap is important, though, because the landing preps you to move straight into the next movement — the idea is to reduce the pause between touching down and powering off into the strike. It's important to land on the balls of your feet with weight evenly distributed; you absorb the drop by bending the knees, which also loads your legs for the second leap.

Do this drill for however many reps suit your purpose before changing roles with your partner or resting, ensuring that you don't compromise form.

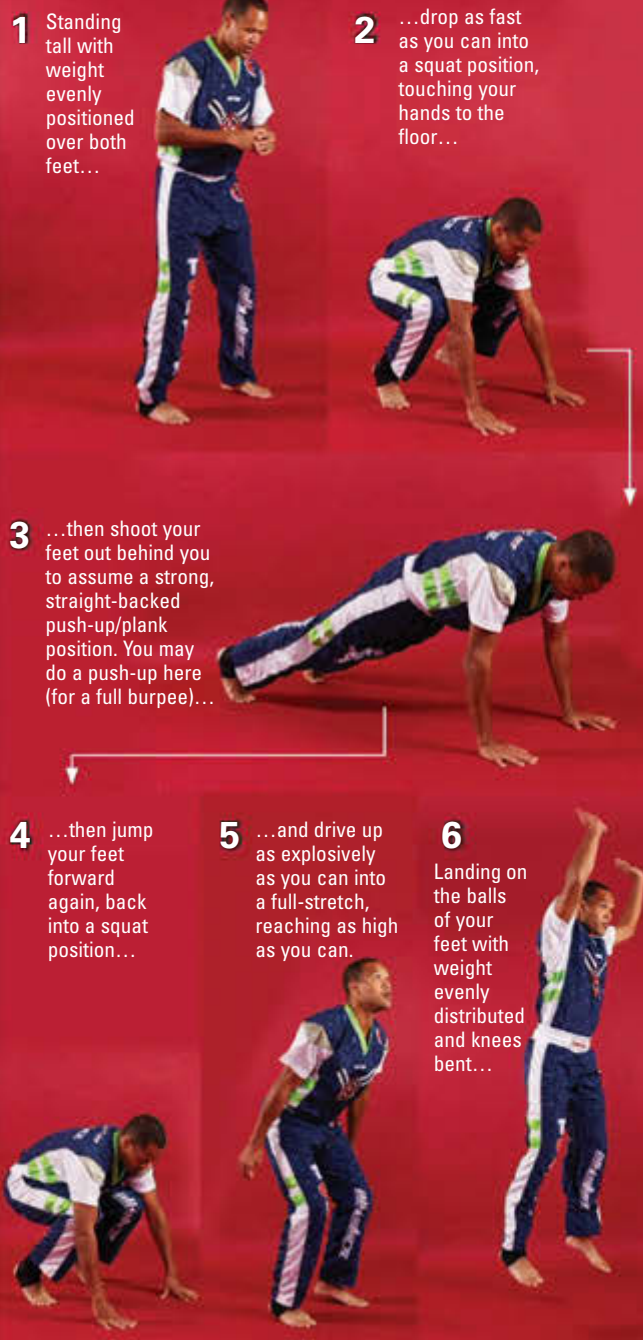
**Note: The version shown here uses the burpee; the alternative tuck-jump version is shown in the video — download your free In-Site app to watch Daniels' video lesson.*

THE RESULT

This drill is essentially a plyometric exercise designed to build the body's ability to recruit fast-twitch muscle fibres and thus increase your ability to explode from point A to point B. However, it also teaches this in the context of an effective technique, developing your ability to maintain accuracy and focus when exploding in from out of range to strike the given target.

Regardless of whether you use the same striking method on entry as shown here, the drill also trains the concept of 'cancellation', meaning that

JUMP & DIVE-BOMB DRILL



your end position cancels out your opponent's counter-strike options, because you are out of the way of their primary bodily weapons, on what is often referred to as the opponent's 'blind side'.

And of course, it guarantees a good conditioning workout — just how good will depend on how you run the drill in terms of reps/time, sets and change-overs with your partner. ■

7

...you immediately turn and power off your back foot...



8

...into a leaping/lunging strike or 'dive bomb', aiming to follow through the centre of the target and land past it.



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THE BURN WITH MATT BEECROFT



Go Heavy, Go Often

When it comes to getting strong, as much of the science lies in the programming of training sessions as the grunt work itself. And it all starts with three key principles...

There are really only four main ways to overload the body when it comes to strength training to produce adaptation:

1. Intensity (usually measured by a percentage of a maximum or load)
2. Volume (total work performed)
3. Density (total work performed per given unit of time)
4. Exercise selection

Any strength coach or system that gets great results knows how to program based on these principles. What is important to note is that they all work hand in hand with each other.

Other factors that come into play include order of exercises, then other overload principles or methods including drop-sets, super, tri and giant sets, rest-pause, negative training, and so on. Sets, reps, rest times and tempos, number of sets per body part and the like all play a part in the result on the body.

The bottom line with programming is this: training is simply a stimulus. You provide the body with a stimulus, it recovers and you adapt. The key is to understand your client, athlete, students or your own body and what goals they/you have, then provide them with the right stimulus for adaptation.

Professor Zatsiorsky, a chief coach for all Soviet sports teams from 1980 to 1988, states in his classic book, *Science and Practice of Strength Training*, that the secret to gaining strength is the following: "Train as often as



possible, as heavy as possible, as fresh as possible."

Let's break these down and look at some strategies to implement and achieve them.

1 TRAIN AS HEAVY AS POSSIBLE

This is where it sounds simple, but isn't. According to the professor, the average percentage of a one-rep maximum (the heaviest weight you can lift for a single rep — a measure of intensity) that the average Soviet weightlifter on the Olympic teams lifted between 1980 and 1988 was 75 per cent, plus or minus two per cent — so, a range of 73-to-77 per cent of their

one-rep max lifts. That doesn't seem very heavy, but that average load produced multiple world champions and Olympic medallists.

This is where so many strength and conditioning coaches go wrong. Load and frequency have an inverse relationship: the higher the load is, the less frequently you can train (without the use of performance-enhancing drugs and stimulants) without risking overtraining and inevitable burnout. It overloads the nervous system.

That's right: the champions train at over 90 per cent effort just seven per cent of the time. Put simply, the majority

of your training should be in the range of 60-to-80 per cent of your one-rep max and then occasionally pushing it harder. This allows you to train more frequently and to be fresher when you do — this helps with continuity in strength training, which is often one of the hardest things to achieve.

Strategy: Train with around 60-to-80 per cent of your one-rep max weights year round, and work with 90 per cent or more of your max no more than 10 per cent of the time.

The bottom line is you don't need to be training at near-maximum effort all the time to get strong. So if you want to avoid injury and soreness — a

big plus if strength training is supplementary to your martial art or sport — then this is clearly the best way to go.

2 TRAIN AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE

How do you train more often when you are burnt out and sore all the time? This is why training at around 70 per cent (intensity) of your one-rep max is so important. Frequency is often an overlooked factor. The only way to get good at something is clearly to do it as often as possible (meaning not only as much as time allows, but as much as your body can sustain and adapt to — and no more). More frequency increases the number, efficiency and therefore strength of your neurological pathways and allows you to manage your fatigue better. I have found that even two short 20-to-30-minute sessions scattered throughout a busy work schedule can be absolutely awesome and get a better result than the two-hour marathon to exhaustion that many commercial gym members do. It's easier to maintain a consistent force output over a shorter duration. In other words, you can work really hard, but not for long. And the payoff is that you can stay a lot more focused in shorter sessions. Researchers actually found that Olympic-level lifters employing multiple daily training sessions produced better hormonal responses including increased testosterone levels. And if you are highly stressed and with high cortisol levels, then shorter sessions are definitely the way to go.

Strategy: Employ 'specialised variety'.

When training as often as possible, it is really important to utilise a concept called 'specialised variety'. When we perform the same exercise over and over, the body can become very efficient, which is great, but the law of accommodation means that because we have

adapted, the given exercise will become less effective at achieving goals. This is especially true when it comes to fat loss; we don't want the body to become too efficient, so it must be constantly challenged to change. When we combine that with the SAID principle, which means 'specific adaptation to imposed demands', then you can see the more you practise something, the better you get at it. This is awesome if our goal is strength, as the better our skill is, the more force we can apply to an object (but we can get bored easily or slow down results if we are after fat loss). Specialised variety means that we can use variations of a

Train with around 60-to-80 per cent of your one-rep max weights year round, and work with 90 per cent or more of your max no more than 10 per cent of the time.

particular exercise to progress. Take the kettlebell swing as an example: you can do two-handed, single-arm, hand-to-hand, dead swings, over-speed eccentrics with bands, double-bell swings or even deadlift variations to get specialised variety and therefore challenge the body (if fat loss is the goal) and mind constantly, and at the same time work on grooving the same movement pattern — hinging at the hips — to get stronger. Clear as mud?

3 WORK AS FRESH AS POSSIBLE

It should be obvious, but if you are well rested and recovered, and have the urge to train, then there is no doubt you will be able to adhere to the other principles.

In my previous articles I have gone over recovery methods and the importance of not overtraining in considerable detail, so we won't cover it again here. Mastering recovery through sleep and adequate

rest, stress levels, hydration and nutrition — as well as other methods such as foam rolling and mobility/flexibility work, hot/cold contrast showers and baths or pool/ocean work, breathing, meal enjoyment, quiet time and laughter — are paramount to staying fresh.

I don't know how many times I had this drummed in to me: it's not how much work you can do; it's how much you can recover from. Poor recovery leads to the law of diminishing returns and no results.

Strategies: Auto regulation and waving loads

Basically, auto regulation is a method of training based on the feedback your body

gives you. It's a simple way to manage your training based upon your effort levels. The best way is via your 'rate of perceived exertion' or RPE. Using a scale of one to 10 (one being relaxing and 10 being an all-out session), you can simply try to match the percentages of your one-rep max (called 'rep max percentages') with your RPE.

If, for example, you are lifting something that is 60 per cent of your rep maxes on an 'easy' day, you want your RPE rating to be a six or lower. Why? If it's less than that, it means you may be getting stronger and you may be able to increase either the load or density that day. If instead you are flat, then fatigue or poor programming may be inhibiting you. If it's

higher, that means you may have miscalculated your one-rep maxes to begin with or you are tired, stressed, distracted and you should back off. On such days you can drop either the load (intensity), volume or density, or even go to an easier exercise to accommodate (see specialised variety). On a bad day, rest would even be a great option so you can come back strong for your next session.

Auto regulating is a very loose way of listening to your body to manage your fatigue. If you are a numbers person, though, as I am, it will take a long time to adjust to this style of training based on feel. But if you can, the benefit is amazing. Learning to trust yourself with this and basing things on feel can be tough when you are used to getting your numbers regardless of form or fatigue.

'Waving' loads with your programming is a great way of managing sessions in order to stay fresh so that you can achieve the other two principles: continuity (i.e. lift as often as possible) and intensity (i.e. lift as heavy as possible). By manipulating intensity, volume and density, we can certainly have light, moderate and hard training days that allow us to push really hard and then back off to allow super-compensation and adaptation without total rest and recovery. An example of this is following a 'hard' day with an 'easy' day rather than following a standard linear periodisation program of just adding load, reps or sets every time you work out. The 'waviness' of the loads allows quicker progression than that of the standard model of linear periodisation.

Next issue, we'll look at exercise selection. ■

Matt Beecroft is an RKC Team Leader and Functional Movement System-certified strength coach with over 13 years experience as a trainer. He's an Expert Level krav maga instructor, nationally accredited boxing coach and national fitness presenter. He also coaches amateur and professional muay Thai fighters. He can be contacted via his website www.realitysdc.com.au

THE COMMON DOMINATOR

BJJ's knee-ride technique

If Brazilian jiu-jitsu could offer an essential control technique that offers the most varied applications — especially for tactical and self-defence application — it would be the knee-ride or 'knee-on-belly'. Here, BJJ Australia chief instructor John Will reveals why it's such a key piece in the grappling puzzle and demonstrates some of its many uses.

STORY & INSTRUCTION BY JOHN B WILL | IMAGES BY CHARLIE SURIANO

> KNEE-RIDE FROM THE MOUNT <

1 Here, Will begins in the mount — a powerful position but not as mobile or versatile as knee-ride in a self-defence situation.



2 Will presses his weight forward, smothering his opponent and taking his focus up high...



3 ...allowing Will the space and opportunity to withdraw one leg from under the opponent's hip. Will's arms are also loaded and ready...



4



...to drive up and away from his opponent as Will switches his knee up onto the belly, using his other leg as an 'outrigger' as he pins his foe with a hand on the shoulder!



> KNEE-RIDING FOR MOBILITY <

6 Wanting to better his position, Will jams his opponent's far shoulder to the floor while controlling his near arm with pressure...



7 ...then quickly posts his top/left hand on the mat as a 'post', shifting some of his weight to his arms...



8 ...so he can swivel his hips and shift his legs quickly across his opponent's body (still maintaining contact with his knee)...



9 ...and switch into a knee-ride position on the opposite side, now using his left knee...



10 ...immediately changing his hand position to pressure the far shoulder.



5

Will can then again assume a control position, putting his bodyweight over his knee while pulling his opponent up into it via his arm and leg.

For those who have yet to receive the 'memo', groundfighting is all about positional control.

Meaning, if you can get to the position you want, and maintain it, you will find yourself much, much more able to apply the submission hold or 'finish' of your choosing. In short, position is the key! 'Position, position, position' is a phrase often heard on the mats of Brazilian jiu-jitsu clubs, and for good reason. Far

more than your strength (relying on which is not smart, and prevents us exploiting the technical advantages of BJJ) and even your knowledge of leverage, the

position of your body in relation to your opponent's will have the greatest bearing on whether you can easily and effectively apply your 'end game', as it were. If you're not in the right position, you won't be able to do what you want, or need, to do. Your control will be compromised, and thus so will be your leverage. As the saying goes, he who controls, bites.

One of the most dominating and versatile of positions is the knee-ride. In the USA, it is most often referred to as the 'knee-on-belly' position, but I could never quite take to that, so in 1987 I dubbed it 'knee-ride'. The knee-ride isn't an easy position to master; it comes at a price. But once mastered, it offers several advantages over other dominating ground positions; and so in my estimation, it is well worth developing. The art of Brazilian jiu-jitsu places a fair emphasis on the knee-ride, such that it is even seen as a scoring position in modern competition.

Technically, the knee-ride

is much more akin to 'surfing' the opponent than it is to holding or immobilising him. Ultimately, it is about moving with the opponent, following him and 'riding' him — all the while controlling via top pressure — long enough to be able to set up and execute our 'finish'. It isn't easy to feel comfortable and at ease with the knee-ride because we tend not to feel that control is true control if we are still on the move, as opposed to pinning our opponent down and keeping him essentially still.

KNEE-RIDE ESSENTIALS

There are various styles of knee-ride: 'high' — postured upright and pulling up on the opponent's limbs to apply maximum pressure — and 'low' — well balanced and with more focus put on enjoying a well-cushioned 'surf' rather than the application of pressure. There are also a number of different grips, many of which are specifically geared toward the various attacks that we can employ from this position. Regardless of the type of knee-ride we use, several key points remain constant:

- We need to cultivate a willingness to go where the opponent goes — that is, to ride/surf him and maintain critical mobile balance rather than trying to immobilise him.

- To that end, it is crucial to fully commit to the knee-ride and apply all of our weight through the riding knee rather than having weight on our 'outrigger' (or 'posting', meaning stabilising) leg. The more weight we have on the outrigger leg, the more we become anchored to the floor.

- By either pulling up on the opponent's nearest arm or pushing down on his far shoulder, we minimise his ability to 'rotate', which makes it easier to ride/surf him.

With the first strategy, we are increasing our downward pressure by adding an opposing force, thus putting too great a pressure through a single point

ENTRY TO KNEE-RIDE

In the clinch position, Will has hold of his opponent's upper arm with one hand and controls the back of his head with the other.



Exploiting his opponent's forward pressure by pulling him in, Will simultaneously angles his body outward and drives off his rear foot...



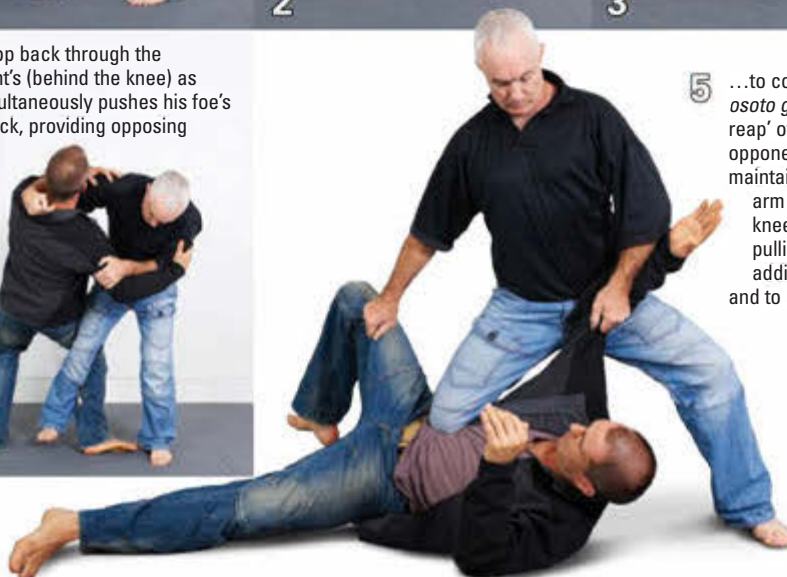
...to step out past his opponent's now-leading foot and load up his right leg...



...to chop back through the opponent's (behind the knee) as Will simultaneously pushes his foe's torso back, providing opposing force...



5 ...to complete the *osoto gari* or 'outer reap' of the leg. As his opponent drops, Will maintains control of the arm and takes the knee-ride position, pulling the leg for additional control and to add pressure.



(the spot under our knee) for him to swivel on it. The second strategy flattens the opponent's back to the floor and with two points pinned, he is unable to shift his mass onto a single point in order to swivel or rotate out.

- Remember when practising to ride on the opponent's soft abdominals and not the ribs, both to reduce the risk of injuring them and to enjoy a softer and more 'shock-absorbing' ride.

STREET VALUE

The great advantage of the knee-ride is that it gives us a 'foot in each world' so to speak — we are grappling and connected to our opponent but

we can easily and seamlessly disengage and deal with potential third-party attacks. In real-world scenarios, the ability to get back to our feet and switch to 'stand-up' fighting strategies is very important, particularly in situations where multiple attackers are involved or likely to become involved. A one-on-one fight was never a certainty, but seems ever more rare these days. And even if we're lucky enough to only have to deal with a single opponent, it is a good idea to dissuade well-intentioned passers-by from interfering on behalf of our opponent, and the knee-ride is very useful under these circumstances.

Over the years, I have had

very positive feedback from security personnel who have employed the knee-ride when circumstances required. What they have liked most is the fact that the knee-ride appears to be such a dominating position — the psychological effect of this on onlookers means that potential 'jumpers-in' tend to stay back and remain uninvolved in the scuffle. Remember the old adage: sometimes you need to win the battle you are engaged in, but (in that same moment) you also need to win other potential future battles from those looking on.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

For reasons I have already

> KNEE-RIDE TO FIGURE-4 <

1

Will is in a secure knee-ride position, driving his bodyweight down through his knee while pulling his opponent up into it via his near arm and opposite leg.



2

Will releases the leg to instead pin his opponent's far arm (dropping his hips back slightly and keeping his 'outrigger' left leg extended for counter balance...

3

...then brings his knee over the opponent's head to the floor, his right arm and knee providing the top pressure needed for control in transition.

4

Sitting his weight down on his opponent, Will then scoops under the trapped arm...



5

...to take a figure-four hold on his opponent's wrist. Raising the arm so it is bent at a right angle, forearm parallel to the floor, and held tight against Will's body...

6

...Will rotates the arm anti-clockwise (against the shoulder's natural range) for the lock/submission.



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> KNEE-RIDE FROM SIDE CONTROL <

1 Here, Will is in side-control position: controlling his opponent's head with his left hand, the far arm with his right, and knees drawn up to close any gaps.



2 Will then grips his opponent's near elbow, drawing the arm up as he presses his weight down through his chest and posts his top leg out...



3 ...and posts his right arm in the floor, creating the room to quickly slide his bottom knee onto his opponent's belly.



4 Will then postures up, putting his weight through his knee and pulling up on the opponent's leg to increase the pressure, and uses his 'outrigger' leg to maintain balance.



> DISENGAGING WITH KNEE-RIDE <

Will is controlling his attacker in a secure knee-ride position, but is in a situation where his best tactical option is to escape the situation...

...so he uses his grips on the far leg and near arm to drive his opponent onto his side, backing off his knee pressure and planting his foot...



1 ...using a hand to prevent the attacker rolling back towards Will as he regains his footing and backs off to a safe distance...



2 ...from where he can see, address and potentially deal with other threats, or simply make a quick escape.



stated, law enforcement personnel, depending on operational demands, find the knee-ride to be a very effective tool. It is a great way of controlling a non-compliant offender that does not necessarily tie the operator to the ground or, importantly, limit his ability to turn and get full visual coverage of his surroundings. It is also very useful for setting up several cuffing/strapping strategies. And of course, it makes disengagement from the opponent a relatively easy — and quick — thing to accomplish.

The knee-ride was probably developed as a follow-up to a fundamental and effective throw used widely in all forms of jujutsu/jiu-jitsu and judo: the outside reap, or *osoto gari*. As the thrown opponent lands at our feet, the knee-ride becomes a very obvious go-to position, especially as our hand grips are already in position to complete the control and provide the opposing force. However, we can arrive at the knee-ride position from the mount (straddling an opponent who is flat on their back), from side-control (our legs to one side of the opponent, who is on his back, with our torso pressure as well as our arms providing the control) and from several sweeps or 'reversals' from the guard (where we are on our backs using our legs to control a kneeling or standing opponent). It is strong, aggressive and allows for a variety of attacks on the neck, arms and legs of the opponent. Even many stand-up or striking-focused martial arts include dropping the knee into a falling opponent as pretty standard practice, using the knee-drop as both a damaging strike and a way to then effect momentary control while they deliver follow-up strikes with the hands or look to immobilise the arm. So for them, the knee-ride might perhaps be a point of focus when looking into the grappling arts to expand their technical repertoire.

The knee-ride takes time to master but the dividends for undertaking the challenge are significant. Add it to your arsenal today. ■

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Inside a traditional karate gasshuku

REFLECTION AND SWEAT

At the end of April 2015, the Shinseidokan dojo held a *gasshuku* — a gathering of a small group of karateka to test and hone their Goju-ryu in the traditional Okinawan way. *Blitz* karate correspondent and Shinseidokan chief instructor Sensei Mike Clarke, 8th Dan, gives some insight into what goes down at a *gasshuku* and what the students learned along the way.

STORY BY MIKE CLARKE

Some years ago, the Shinseidokan *gasshuku* was a twice-yearly event, and along with the annual mid-winter training (*kangeiko*) formed the three pillars upon which students at the dojo built the foundations of their karate. These days the students have a strong foundation to their karate, so it's no longer necessary to continue their education in the same way as before. Now is the time to develop character as well as technique, to absorb principles instead of procedures, to move their karate away from the choreography of training and to look inward toward the 'self'.

My student group is necessarily small. I don't teach karate to anyone who asks, and I don't share my home or dojo with anyone who feels like stopping by either; in short, I'm fussy about the karateka I mix with. I may

appear to be acting superior and even arrogant here, I know, but consider this: In any other aspect of your life, would you permit people you don't know intruding upon you, sapping your enthusiasm and using you for their own convenience? Well...would you? If you do allow this, then your life is not your own, and if that's the case, the same can be said of your karate.

Some students travelled to Launceston, Tasmania from as far away as Broome in far north Western Australia, while others flew in from South Australia and Melbourne. The *gasshuku* began on Friday evening, but on Thursday night there was informal training for the early arrivals, who discussed and practised Sanchin kata. For the students at the Shinseidokan, 'hard' training isn't always about leaving buckets of sweat on the dojo floor; often just as confronting as a tough physical workout is my insistence that students not only know what they are doing, but why they do it. Regardless of the number of students training in the dojo, practice at the Shinseidokan is always a class on one!

The first training session of the *gasshuku* ran from 5pm to 8pm on the Friday, and for the majority of that time looked closely at *junbi undo* (preparation exercises) and *kigu undo* (exercises with training tools/weights). The intrusion of sport

into karate, along with the notion of 'keeping fit', has changed the mindset of today's karateka; in traditional Okinawan karate, the concept of 'warming up' plays no role at all. *Junbi undo*, however, do perform a vital function on a number of levels, not least of which is to introduce a new student to basic stances, foot and hand positions, body alignment, balance, as well as the coordination of breath and movement. Many muscles and tendons are isolated and strengthened by *junbi undo*, often bringing them to the notice of a beginner for the first time. *Junbi undo* at the Shinseidokan is not something we do before we begin karate training proper; instead, it is an integral building block in the learning and understanding of karate. It is never rushed nor relegated to a support role before the main event.

Kigu (tools) play a major role in the study of Goju-ryu, not only because of the focus the various tools bring to bear on a karateka's body and mind, but because they are a tangible link to the training practises of the past, and in that role serve as a physical reminder that you are a part of something greater than any individual. *Kigu undo* always follows *junbi undo*, and in this way students learn to prepare their bodies and minds before moving on to conditioning them. With a large array of *kigu* to work with, each in its own way challenged the karateka to find his limits and then push through them. As one student noted, "Studying authentic budo is living in front of an unforgiving



Using unique Okinawan conditioning tools



Clarke (front, centre) and the gasshuku group

mirror. Whether you are training *hojo undo* (conditioning exercises, which may incorporate *kigu*), working principles with a partner, or silently hitting your own psychological wall after many hours in the dojo, you see the limits of your body, your understanding and your character reflected in the facets of training.”

At 9am the next morning, the students lined up. Already a little less ‘fresh’ than the day before, the next three hours would test them that bit further. With the exception of solo kata practice, Shinseidokan students are continually confronted with resistance in the dojo. It begins with fellow students being unwilling to accommodate the karate choreography that so often passes for ‘training’ these days when working together; but even when there is no other student to face, *kigu* are used to lift, grip or wrestle with. Beyond the initial introduction of basic techniques to a beginner, *kihon* — the art’s fundamental movements — are seldom practised in thin air at the Shinseidokan, for what would be the point of it?

After first practising *junbi* and *kigu undo*, the students worked together to hone their *kihon waza* (basic

“**I ENCOURAGE SHINSEIDOKAN STUDENTS TO VIEW THEIR PROGRESS IN KARATE BY THE DEPTH OF SKILL THEY ACQUIRE AND THEIR LEVEL OF APPRECIATION FOR THE BIGGER PICTURE RATHER THAN MEASURE IT BY THE COLOUR OF THEIR BELT**”

techniques). Blocking at close quarters encourages a reliance on principles rather than fashion when it comes to the application of fundamental techniques. Timing, distance and the effective use of *hikite* (the withdrawing hand) were all looked at in some detail. With each student facing many blows, each had ample opportunity to polish their skills and sharpen their technique. As another student’s comments show, the physical difficulties of training run in tandem with the development of mental toughness: “Among many things [over the life of the gasshuku], I felt a reassessment of my physical limits and a questioning of where a sense of limit comes from. I noted the importance of timing when under pressure. Appreciating ‘form’ even when the body

starts to argue with some postures — the form and basic concepts of karate become all the more important when muscular strength starts to fade.”

He went on to say, “The same questioning of limits can be said of unpleasant sensations when repeating blocking techniques after arm-conditioning exercises. The task at hand doesn’t get any easier, so your best bet is to ‘throw away’ the concern for pain and concentrate on posture and breath — in doing so, (body) weight, timing and distance work better in relation to a training partner, helping to reduce collision and allowing for a more cordial exchange of forces. This sense of ‘things working well’ can be quite pleasing, especially when you thought you were tired.”

I encourage Shinseidokan students to view their progress in karate by the depth of skill they acquire and their level of appreciation for the ‘bigger picture’ rather than measure it by the colour of their belt; to that end, and for many years, the Shinseidokan dojo only uses belts that are white, brown or black.

That afternoon, *kakie*, or pushing-hands training, focused attention on the role of subtlety in karate, as well as the need to cultivate

intuition and sensitivity of feeling. By establishing contact with another person, it is possible to grasp the layout and whereabouts of their entire body. It is also possible through such contact to sense their intention to engage or retreat. Knowing if a person is prone to fight or flight is a level of tactical intelligence so often squandered in the sport-centric approach to karate, where sparring is confused with fighting, and the goal is to score a point. No such consideration is given to combat at the Shinseidokan dojo; for me, fighting is a serious business, something to avoid if at all possible, but should the talking stop and the distance close, then the outcome must be one that leads to victory.

The final day of the gasshuku began once again at 9am. While I took the time to assist each student individually throughout the course of the morning, the rest of the students worked their way through the *kihon-bunkai* (basic application) of various kata. Everybody was aware that I would be assessing them for promotion over the weekend, with formal grading tests having become redundant. With six students present at the gasshuku, all with different abilities and numbers of years of training behind them, promotion was a simple matter of recognising the progress each has made in relation to where they used to be. As I reminded each student, it is not for me to



Students engaged in kata bunkai drills

confer rank upon them, but for them to display a deeper level of understanding and greater ability than I have been able to recognise in them before. In this way, promotion is a question of personal growth, not something to be purchased or have bestowed.

The gasshuku drew to a close midway through the afternoon, when a tired group of karateka bowed to the shomen for the final time. Over the past few days they had worked hard to develop the skills and deepen their understanding. Several of the students were meeting each other for the first time, even though the most recent student joined the dojo over three years ago, but they parted company as friends who have a great deal in common beyond the shared experience of a gasshuku. They have no desire for rank, status or a quick fix; instead, they are pursuing a personal challenge to develop an ever increasing relationship with budo, to rid themselves of a dualistic nature so as to integrate their

experiences in the dojo with their daily lives.

The term 'gasshuku' is often used for other things in the marketing of karate, mistaken as the Japanese word for 'camp' or 'seminar', but a gasshuku is really neither. With a meaning in English closer to 'lodging together', a gasshuku offers an opportunity for budoka to immerse themselves in their craft, to take time out from their normal lives and invest in their self. Not only did the students spend many hours together in the dojo, they also ate lunch together in my home each day, meals and drinks were prepared by my wife and me, and served to them as they relaxed. It was a lesson to each student of the strength that comes with giving and the need to remain humble if you are ever to recognise the subtle strength found in budo.

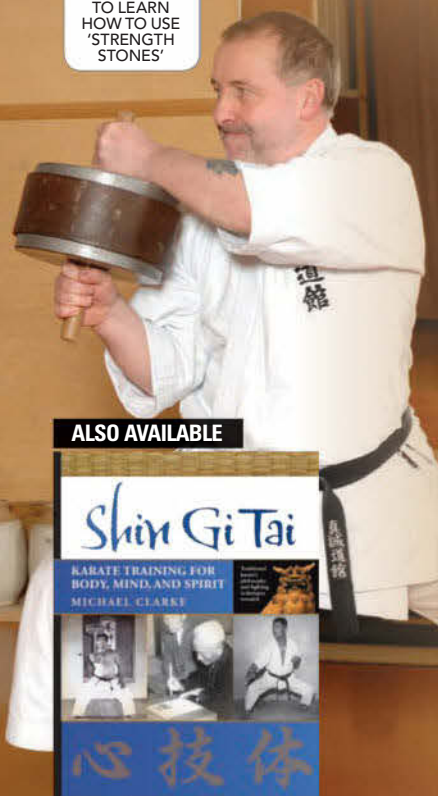
As for who achieved promotion, I recognised significant growth in half the students. ■

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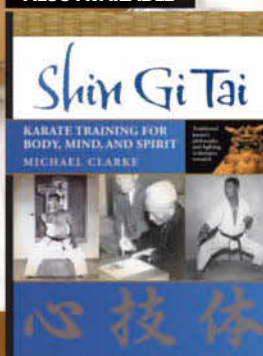
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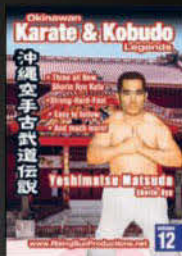
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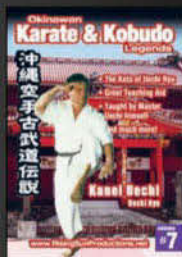
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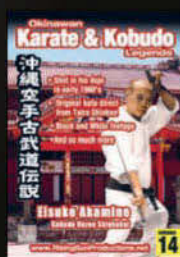
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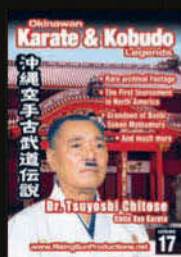
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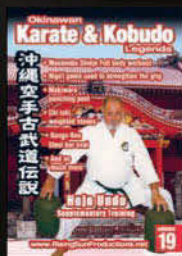
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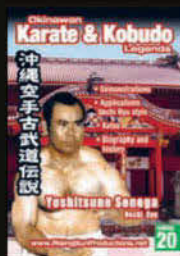
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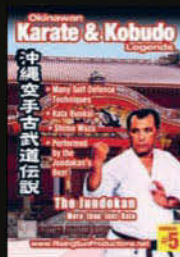
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WHAT IS JUJUTSU?

PART 2

Unravelling the origins of
Japan's core martial art

Long before a group of South American fighters introduced the world to the groundfighting prowess of their Brazilian 'jiu-jitsu', jujutsu was the collective name used for the various hand-to-hand combat methods of Japan's samurai. Changes in class, culture and weaponry restrictions saw the art later adopted by civilians, and it ultimately spread across the world and branched into sporting streams as well. It began as a warrior's way to survive, but what exactly is jujutsu today? Having covered its deep samurai roots last issue, here, long-time jujutsu instructor and researcher John Coles delves into the art's evolution in the modern era — starting with the birth of judo.

STORY BY JOHN COLES



WA-based
jujutsu master
Hans De Jong

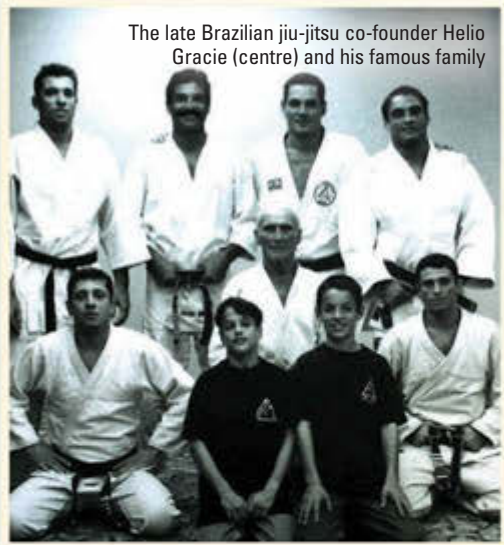
Judo founder
Jigoro Kano



Aussie pioneer Pat Harrington
with judo 10th Dan Kyuzo Mifune



The late Brazilian jiu-jitsu co-founder Helio
Gracie (centre) and his famous family



Jigoro Kano, after initially struggling to find anyone who was still teaching jujutsu, finally joined the Tenjin Shin'yo Ryu in 1877. Following the death of his instructor, Kano joined the Kito Ryu in 1882 and also sought to expand his jujutsu knowledge through the academic study of several other jujutsu schools. Famously, he went on to develop his own style of jujutsu, which he later rebadged as Kodokan judo. The term judo had actually already been used by the Jikishin Ryu in 1724 to refer to their jujutsu methods, so Kano added 'Kodokan' to the name. But this was not only to distinguish his methods from those of the Jikishin Ryu, it was a deliberate attempt to distance his teachings from the prevailing negative perceptions of jujutsu, which had become associated with violence.

By the beginning of the 1880s, the Japanese

government had taken steps both to reinstate traditional moral training in the schools as it sought to redefine the aim of the education system to serve the state rather than the individual. Kano, then being an educator, developed his judo so to reflect these goals. In a continuation of the trend towards using the martial arts as a vehicle for the 'cultivation of the physical and spiritual cultivation of the self' that prevailed during the peaceful Tokugawa era (1603–1867), Kano emphasised the physical education and social dimensions of the art. That his budo then evolved into a sporting endeavour can be seen to be just another evolutionary development — without placing any judgment nor suggesting, as Kano did, that it was supplanting one form of jujutsu with another.

Evolution is non-judgemental. Evolution is about adaptation to a

particular environment and is therefore concerned with 'fit' rather than favouring any particular characteristic. This means that if we are armed with an appreciation of the evolutionary history of any given phenomena, we can then assess its 'fit' with a particular environment, particularly one that may differ to the environment that spawned it to begin with. We can, for example, assess the jujutsu methods of the samurai, or the first incarnation of judo as a sport, with our needs today.

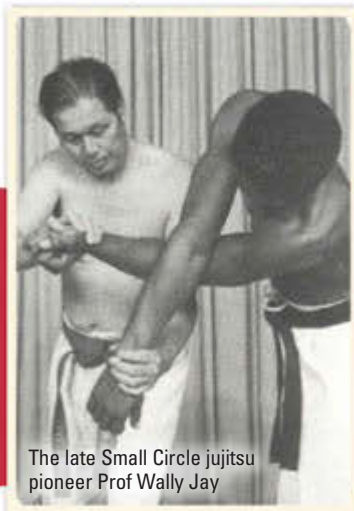
The Meiji Restoration also ended the *sakoku*, the 'closed country' policy that had been enacted in 1639. This marked the beginning of the internationalisation of jujutsu, with some foreigners beginning to learn the art in Japan, and various jujutsu teachers travelling abroad to teach it. Some of these teachers were not necessarily masters of their art, yet they found

they could make some sort of living out of teaching what they did know. The opening of the country also meant that jujutsu came to be influenced to varying degrees by other martial arts, particularly the boxing methods of China, Okinawa and Korea. And so jujutsu continued to evolve.

JUJUTSU'S TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT

As explained in the previous issue, the wearing of armour and the presence of weapons shaped the development of the tactics of jujutsu. The focus of both its tactics and techniques was on controlling the opponent and his weapon, with significantly less emphasis placed on striking, or *atemi waza*. However, reflecting the

**EVOLUTION IS NON-JUDGEMENTAL.
EVOLUTION IS ABOUT ADAPTATION TO A PARTICULAR
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RATHER THAN FAVOURING ANY PARTICULAR CHARACTERISTIC.**



The late Small Circle jujitsu
pioneer Prof Wally Jay



Australian jujutsu legend
Shihan Mark Haseman

**“ THE PRINCIPLE OF JU:
WHAT YOU WANT TO OVERCOME,
YOU MUST FIRST OF ALL SUBMIT TO.
WHEN YOU WANT TO TAKE OVER,
YOU MUST FIRST OF ALL GIVE TO.”**



From hand-to-hand samurai battle tactics (left), jujutsu has borne modern-day arrest tactics (top) and the sport jiu-jitsu developed by the likes of Carlos Gracie Jr (below)



generic nature of the term ‘jujutsu’ — and as an example of why it’s hard to form general conclusions about the art — there were, and still are, some jujutsu systems that emphasised atemi waza. Tenjin Shin’yo Ryu provides one such example of a striking-focused jujutsu system.

After studying a number of jujutsu styles, Iso Mataemon, the founder of Tenjin Shin’yo Ryu, embarked on a journey, travelling about the country seeking new knowledge and engaging in sparring matches to test and improve his skills. This practice is known as *musha shugyo* (‘warrior’s pilgrimage’) and is believed to have been common among serious martial art students. During his travels, it is said that he and one of his students came to the aid of a man under attack, and they were forced to fight more than 100 attackers. Using atemi waza, he was able to ward off the attackers without having to kill them, and as a consequence, came to gain an appreciation for the efficacy of atemi waza. He then devoted himself to a concentrated study of atemi waza and incorporated this knowledge into his own system of jujutsu.

The systems that came to emphasise atemi waza were founded during the late Tokugawa onwards, and reflect the adaptation of some of the ‘in-close fighting’ systems of the bushi and samurai to the changing times. Each of these systems that emphasised atemi waza are still included under the generic name of ‘jujutsu’ along with the jujutsu systems with a tactical control imperative.

THE CONCEPT OF JU

As legendary martial arts master and historian Donn Draeger and co-author R.W. Smith explain in their 1980 book *Comprehensive Asian Fighting Arts*, jujutsu is the only discipline of the *bugei* — the original term for Japan’s

traditional military disciplines — that does not take its name from the weapons it uses, nor from its form. Instead, its name is derived from its essential principle: *ju*. However, they explain that this principle has been interpreted in highly individual and technically varied ways, providing another point of differentiation between the various systems included under the generic name ‘jujutsu’.

In his classic *The Fighting Spirit of Japan* (1955), E.J. Harrison explains that jujutsu is written with two ideographs: the first *ju*, meaning ‘to obey, submit to, weak, soft, pliable’, and the second *jutsu*, meaning ‘art’ or ‘science’ (confusing in itself given that in the West, art and science are certainly not synonymous). He explains that the use of the first character is intended to imply that jujutsu relies for its triumphs not upon brute strength but upon skill and finesse, the ability to win by appearing to yield.

This reliance on the use of skill and finesse over brute strength, of appearing to yield to achieve a strategic outcome, stems from the application of the philosophy of, broadly speaking, non-resistance. The principle extracted from this philosophy advocates that the most efficient and effective way to overcome problems or adversity is by non-contention or yielding, which is not submission or capitulation, but rather the exercising of control by taking the way of least resistance. This philosophy permeates East Asian culture, and the East Asian martial arts, from judo to Mao Zedong’s (Mao Tse-tung) military strategy, have recognised and implemented this principle. The Taoist classic, *Tao Te Ching*, is a treatise dedicated to this philosophy and is often quoted in reference to, and to suggest the strategic advantage of, the principle of *ju*: What you want to overcome, you must first of all submit to. When you want to take over,

you must first of all give to.

The use of the term ju, Draeger explains in *Classical Budo*, is usually misinterpreted by the Westerner and is often misunderstood, which gives rise to misconceptions regarding the so-called 'gentle art'. Like Harrison, Draeger refers to the strength versus skill and finesse, and resistance versus yielding dichotomy — the *go* (hard) versus *ju* (soft) dichotomy — when analysing the various interpretations. However, Draeger also stresses that combat-effective jujutsu did not rely solely on ju when interpreted in this manner, and that the use of functionally applied strength and resistance was necessary at times. The principle of ju, he explains, is not as all-pervading as exponents of systems who have taken it at its face value would have all to believe.

Kano, after his study of a number of jujutsu *ryuha*, likewise concluded that there were various interpretations of the principle of ju and that it was not an all-pervasive principle. After giving a number of examples of the use of 'giving way' in order to

defeat an opponent, Kano explains, "there are many instances in jujutsu contest where this principle is applied the name jujutsu (that is gentle, or giving-way art) came to be the name of the whole art. But, strictly speaking, real jujutsu is something more. The ways of gaining victory over an opponent by jujutsu are not confined to gaining victory first by giving way. We sometimes hit, kick, and choke in physical contest, but in contradiction to giving way, these are different forms of positive attack. Sometimes an opponent takes hold of one's wrist. How can one release himself without using his strength against the opponent's grip? The same thing can be said when someone grips him from behind. If, thus, the principle of giving way cannot explain all the tricks [tactics] in jujutsu contest, is there any principle which really covers the whole field? Yes, there is, and that is the principle of the maximum use of mind and body."*

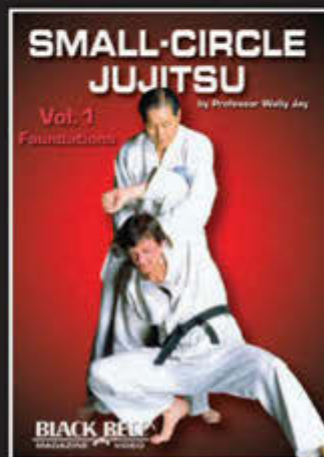
So what is jujutsu? As they say on Facebook these days, it's complicated.

* From Kano's article 'The Contribution of Judo to Education' in *The Overlook Martial Arts Reader* ■

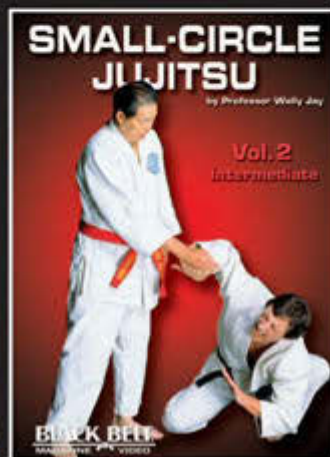
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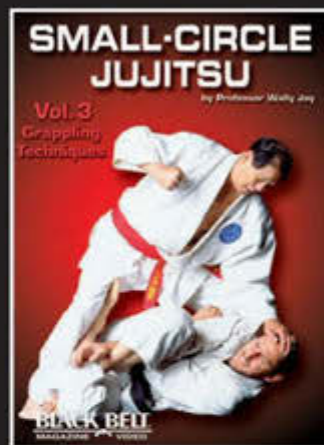
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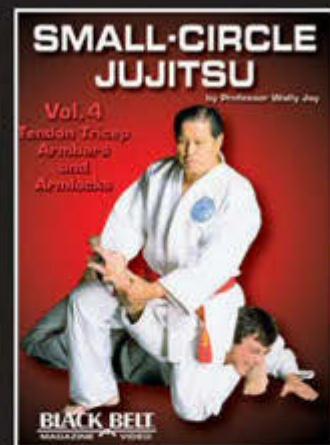
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FIGHT LIFE WITH ROGER GRACIE



Gracie the Great

Who is currently the best grappler fighting in MMA today? Hint: It's not 'Jacare' Souza, Demian Maia or Fabricio Werdum. Here, *Blitz* chats with the man who's defeated all three of them on the mats — 10-time BJJ world champion and ONE FC light-heavyweight Roger Gracie.

INTERVIEW BY BOON MARK SOUPHANH | PHOTOS BY ONE FC & ZUFFA LLC

Like the majority of his Gracie kin, Roger grew up on the mats in Rio de Janeiro, learning the *arte suave* from members of the famed Gracie Barra Academy. With the Gracie blood running in his veins, it seemed Roger was destined for success in the competitive jiu-jitsu scene. However, after failing to take his training seriously

until his teenage years, few would've predicted that he would become the greatest competitor in the history of the art.

Calm and calculated, Roger, in many ways, exemplifies what Gracie jiu-jitsu is about on the mats. As the sport evolved and his competitors developed flashy new techniques, Roger's game remained rooted to the

fundamental, basic principles that had put the Brazilian style of jiu-jitsu on the map: technique and leverage.

Awarded his Black-belt in 2004 by Carlos Gracie Jr, he won the prestigious ADCC submission grappling tournament a year later, submitting all eight of his opponents on his way to winning his division, as well as

the open-weight category. That provided the springboard for what would become the most dominant period ever seen in competitive jiu-jitsu at the elite level. Actively competing in jiu-jitsu between 2004 to 2010, Roger accumulated 10 world championships (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 weight and absolute, 2008, 2009 weight and absolute, 2010



Gracie fires on James McSweeney at One FC

weight and absolute) and established himself as the most successful competitor in the sport's history.

Still at the peak of the powers, Roger always knew MMA was something he'd dedicate himself to. With his uncle Royce paving the way for so many members of his family previously, Roger made his pro MMA debut in 2006. He kicked his MMA career off with three consecutive submission victories over stalwarts of the sport in Ron Waterman, Yuki Kondo and Kevin Randleman before being signed to the now defunct Strikeforce promotion.

Following the UFC's absorption of Strikeforce in 2013, Roger made his long-awaited debut in the promotion against fellow Strikeforce convert Tim Kennedy. Losing a gruelling unanimous decision to the former US Army Ranger, Gracie was not offered a contract renewal from the UFC — a decision that left many with raised eyebrows.

In limbo, Roger decided to remain dedicated to his competitive MMA career after being convinced by his cousin Renzo to continue his MMA journey over returning to the old stomping grounds of competitive jiu-jitsu. Roger was signed to premier Asian MMA promotion ONE FC in late 2014, where he faced fellow UFC vet James McSweeney in his promotion debut. Moving back up to his natural weight class, Roger showed that there are still new strings being added to his bow — even at 33 years of age. Standing toe to toe with a dangerous muay Thai fighter, Roger showed huge improvements in his striking to drop and finish McSweeney in the third round with punches, scoring his first TKO win in the process.

Recently in Australia following his comeback win, Roger continues to preach the Gracie way to his jiu-jitsu

students at the Roger Gracie Academy in London, as well as his followers across the globe. Hosting a huge seminar in Melbourne that saw 22 of Australia's top Black-belts in attendance, it was clear to see that when Roger talks jiu-jitsu, people listen.

Roger, you've managed to get a good taste of the Aussie BJJ scene on this trip with your attendance at the Victorian championships plus your seminars. What is your impression of the scene and how does it compare to back in the UK?

To be honest, the level here is much better than I thought. I didn't realise jiu-jitsu was so popular in Australia — there are so many academies and the response to my seminars was great. I have a lot of great friends here, which makes coming back a lot of fun. Australia is obviously a very big place, so nowadays you have a lot of different academies all over the country with a lot of great Black-belts to show for it as well. Because everything is much more compact in the UK being on a smaller island, there are fewer schools. With that being said, the popularity of the art over there is huge and it will only get better in years to come — just like here in Australia, I'm sure.

Growing up, you obviously trained with some really tough guys to get to where you're at now. Where did you train mostly coming up the ranks and who were your main training partners?

I trained out of the Gracie Barra headquarters in Rio where Carlos Gracie Junior was the head coach. The level was really strong and everyone was really competitive, which helped you stay on top of your game. It was very different to how it is today — everyone in the gym was training to be a champion. From a young age, there were always guys much better than me, so I was

Roger Gracie on the back of Ronaldo 'Jacare' Souza at ADCC 2005



"I always had that 'Gracie' mindset and wanted to test my jiu-jitsu in the realm of MMA. I believe wholeheartedly in my technique and MMA was a logical progression in terms of testing it."

forced to improve to try catch up to them.

Why did you decide to move to the UK? It seems a bit against the trend, as most Brazilians were basing themselves out of the US.

My father lived in the UK, so I had an open gate to go there, pretty much. Every summer holidays I would travel there to visit him, so I was quite familiar with it. When I got my Black-belt (awarded by Carlos Gracie Junior), I decided to stay in the UK and open

up my own gym there. I'm happy there.

After dominating the competitive BJJ scene and winning 10 world championships, why did you decide to make the transition to MMA? Was it always something you wanted to do? Or were you simply looking for a fresh challenge?

MMA was always something I knew I'd do at some point in my life. I always had that 'Gracie' mindset and wanted to test my jiu-jitsu in the realm of

FIGHT LIFE WITH ROGER GRACIE



Gracie lands another one on James McSweeney

MMA. I believe wholeheartedly in my technique and MMA was a logical progression in terms of testing it.

After nine professional MMA fights, you recently scored your first TKO victory (over James McSweeney at ONE FC 23). How stoked were you with that?

Obviously it felt great, but a win is a win. I was happier to get the victory itself rather than thinking about the method. To be honest, I probably would've preferred to take him down and submit him, but it was definitely a great win for me. I was very happy with my performance.

How much MMA-specific training do you do compared to straight BJJ training? Is it tough to balance the two?

Not really. Obviously, when I have an MMA fight coming up, I will gear my training towards MMA more. This means more no-gi BJJ work, striking and stuff like that. With that being said, I'm always training in the gi — I love training in the gi.

Did you feel your jiu-jitsu game translated well when making the transition to MMA?

Of course — all I need is jiu-jitsu (smiles).

You're now plying your trade in ONE FC. While it's yet to make waves in Australia, the promotion is huge in Asia. What's it like being part of that promotion?

It's been awesome. It's huge over in Asia and they're

doing great at the moment. They're the dominant MMA promotion over there and it's easy to see why — there are a lot of great fighters and they constantly give the fans quality events. I'm really enjoying fighting in ONE FC and I feel the shows are fantastic.

With that being said, do you have intentions to

fighting your way back into the UFC? Is that the ultimate goal?

It's not something that I really desire at this point in my career. I'm really happy fighting for ONE FC and I have a great relationship with the people involved. Getting back into the UFC isn't something I care too much about at this point.

When can we expect to see you back in Australia?

I'm not too sure at the moment, but I'm really keen to get back as soon as possible. If I'm lucky, I might be able to come back towards the end of this year. If I can, I'd like to go around the whole country as there's a huge demand for seminars here. It will be nice to see the jiu-jitsu across the country.

So what's next for Roger Gracie? Is there anything you still feel you need to achieve?

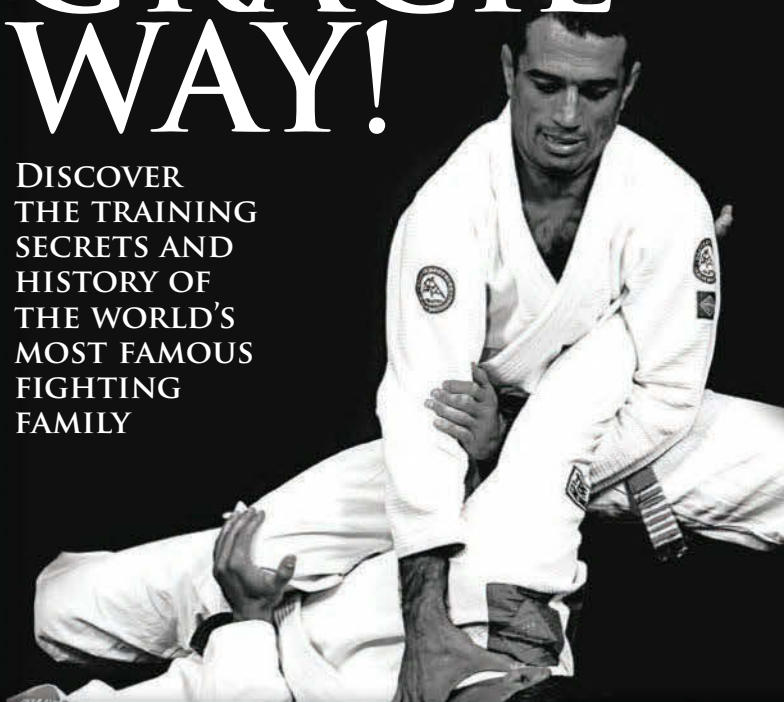
To be honest, I think I've achieved pretty much everything I've wanted already (laughs). I just want to keep doing what I love doing, which is training and fighting — it's pretty simple. ■



Battling Keith Jardine in Strikeforce

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Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Theory and Technique

By Renzo Gracie and Royler Gracie with Kid Peligro

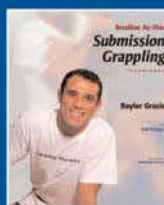
The Brazilian jiu jitsu style stems from the premise, garnered from analysis of actual street fights, that the outcome of many fights is decided on the ground. While most martial arts deal only with the initial punching and kicking stages of combat, Brazilian jiu jitsu concentrates on ground combat. Photographs and step-by-step instructions show how to master the techniques of Brazilian jiu jitsu and increase your combat effectiveness.



Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Black Belt Techniques

By Jean Jacques Machado & Kid Peligro

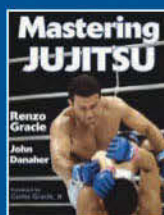
Jean Jacques Machado now presents his entire Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu system in book form for the first time. Detailed is a complete repertoire of Jiu-Jitsu moves to handle any situation that arises, whether on the mat or on the street. Techniques are not presented in isolation, but rather through a series of moves that guide practitioners from an initial threat or opportunity all the way through to a submission hold. More than 100 step-by-step positions are demonstrated.



Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Submission Grappling Techniques

By Royler Gracie with Kid Peligro

The 145-pound Royler Gracie has won three consecutive ADCC titles and four world titles, along with victories in Pride, Vale Tudo, 21st Century Warriors, and many more. Here, he spills his secrets for the first time, showing 102 positions designed specifically for the slippery, fast-paced, unpredictable world of no-gi grappling. It offers Royler's tips on successful combination moves, garnered from his more than 300 professional fights, as well as advice on training routines, mental stamina, and avoiding injuries.

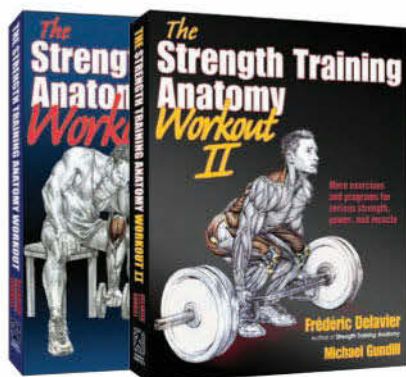


Mastering Jujitsu

By Renzo Gracie

Renzo Gracie — instructor of elite fighters and champion of many grappling and MMA events — will help you progress from isolated skill-development to a full set of tactics and fight plans, and introduce you to the concept of combat phases, teaching you to attack from any phase. You will learn how to react to your opponent in any situation. Whether you're caught in a bottom position or attacking from the top, in the clinch, Gracie reveals the key strategies designed to give you the upper hand and drills to learn them.

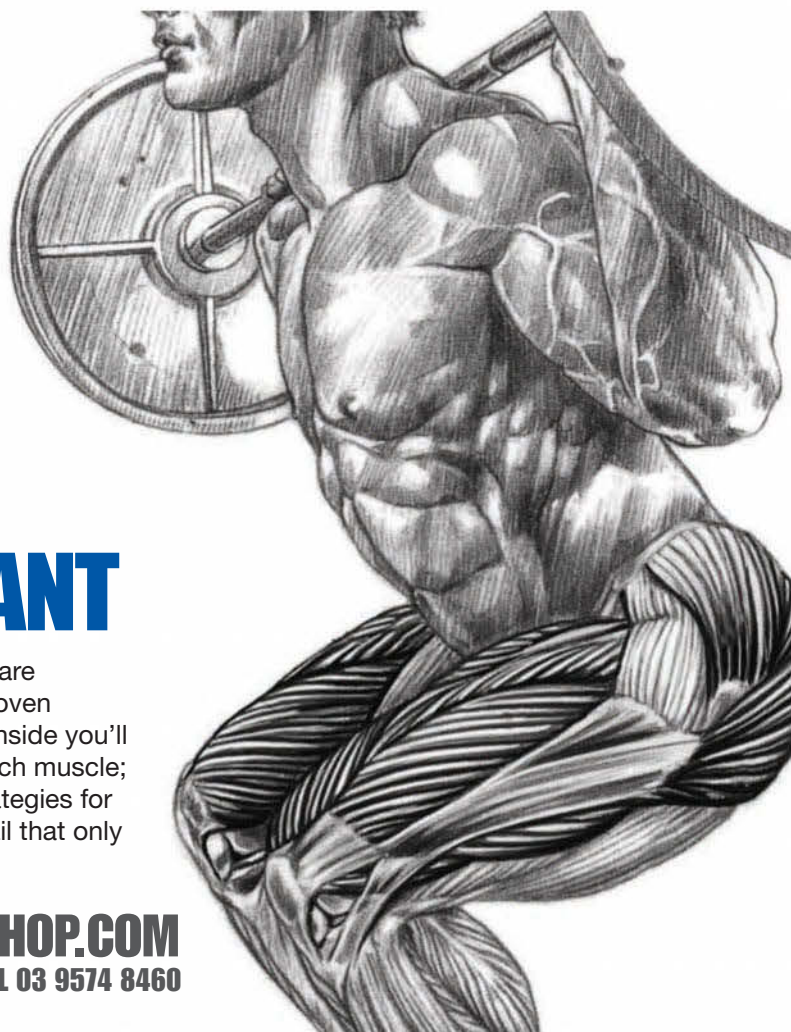
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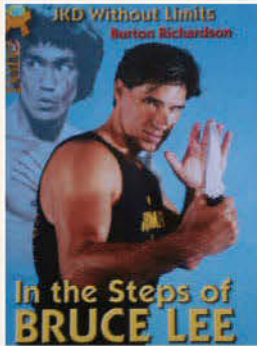
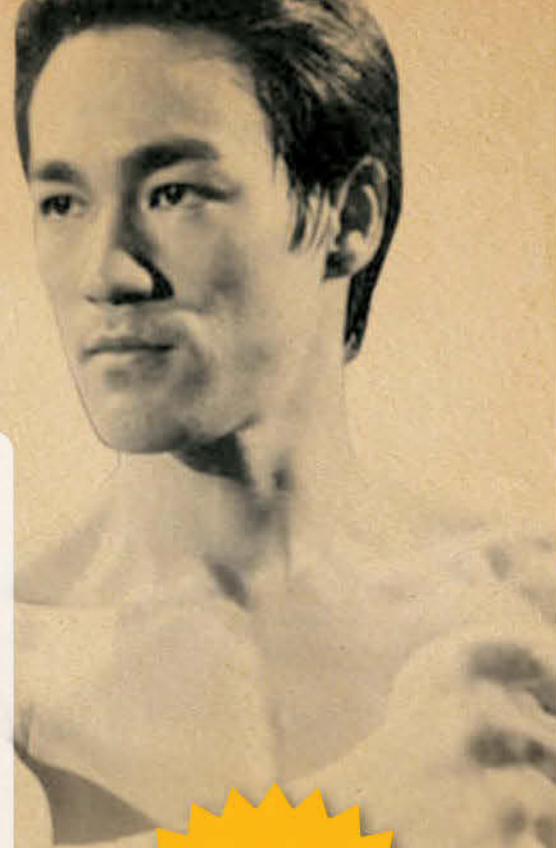
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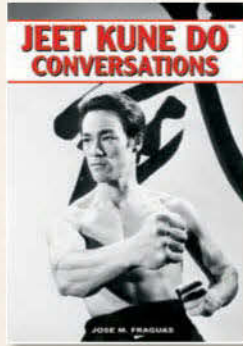
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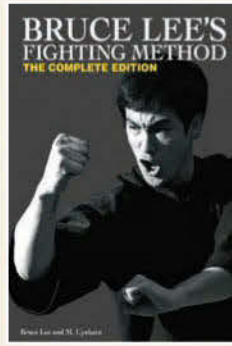
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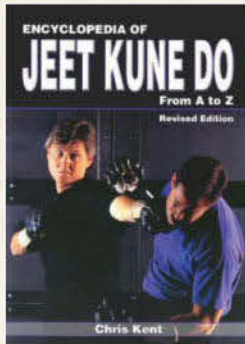
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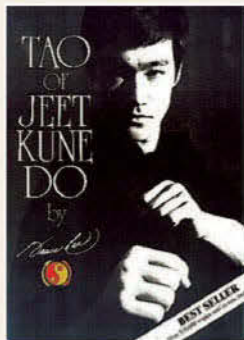
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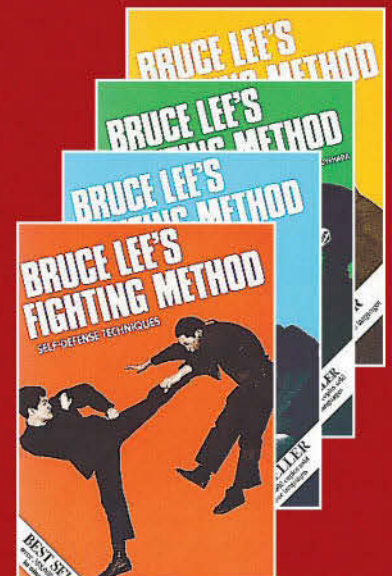
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The UFC's Adelaide Entrée Before the Melbourne Main Course

UFC Adelaide proved a mixed bag for Australia's and New Zealand's best MMA fighters with some scoring important career wins while others faltered.

UFC Fight Night: Miocic vs. Hunt was a real mix of amazing performances and bitter losses for some of Australia's and New Zealand's best MMA talent.

Mark Hunt showed just how inhuman he is, taking probably the biggest beating ever served up in the UFC and somehow surviving until midway through the fifth round.

Anthony Perosh and Daniel Kelly both suffered TKO losses in the first minute of their fights. At 42 and 37 years old respectively, questions will no

doubt be asked about their future in the UFC.

But there were also some unbelievable performances highlighting the talent Australia and New Zealand are beginning to produce in MMA.

If you didn't like Vik Grujic vs. Brendan O'Reilly, then you are not human. The former *TUF* teammates stood in the centre of the Octagon, bit down on their mouthpieces and just unloaded bombs on each other, sending the crowd crazy.

Bec Rawlings produced an important win for her UFC career, absolutely mauling Lisa Ellis on her way to a first-round win by rear-naked choke.

Daniel Hooker vs Hatsu Hioki was a fairly even fight, until of course Hooker found

a home for his shin on Hioki's neck. A little follow-up ground-and-pound and he had himself a \$50,000 bonus.

Robert Whittaker probably hit himself more than Brad Tavares did, beating his chest in triumph repeatedly, clearly ecstatic with his 44-second win — he looked great and also got himself a nice little \$50,000 bonus check.

But for my money the performance of the night was from Australia's Alex Chambers. The very talented Kailin Curran was telling her corner it was all over after dominating 'Astro Girl' for two rounds — and in her defence I also felt the same. As the 36-year-old Aussie stood ready for the third and final round, she was not only looking at a

loss, she was probably looking at the end of her UFC career. But somehow Chambers came from nowhere, attempted a Kimura and switched to an armbar, forcing Curran to tap for the win — a nice little \$50,000 bonus went her way too.

New Zealander Daniel Hooker feels he's earned a spot on the main card of UFC 193 in Melbourne later this year following his emphatic head-kick KO of Hatsu Hioki at UFC Fight Night: Miocic vs. Hunt.

"I will be on that card without a doubt," Hooker told *Fight! Australia*.

"I want to be on the main card — I think I earned the spot."

Daniel Hooker vs Hatsu Hioki was a fairly even fight, until of course Hooker found a home for his shin on Hioki's neck.



Daniel Hooker

GETTY IMAGES

Bec Rawlings (right) makes quick work of UFC Adelaide opponent Lisa Ellis



FIGHT NEWS WITH JARRAH LOH



Wayne Parr KOs Daniel Kerr in his muay Thai return

SHARON RICHARDS

'John' Wayne Parr has made a triumphant return from injury, defeating Daniel Kerr via KO in the third round of their bout at Caged Muay Thai (CMT) 6



Arlene Blencowe

LINDA

Hooker and Hioki were putting on a pretty even performance during the curtain raiser to the main card when Hooker sent the crowd wild with a massive head-kick that made Hioki's knees buckle. Hooker seized the moment, got in a few more punches and left Hioki lying face-first on the canvas.

"It was cool, it was a big show and it was just before the main event," said Hooker.

"You've got to set it up,

you've got to get the crowd going — I did that, so I'm real happy."

He may be a New Zealand native, but Hooker has had just as many fights here in Australia as he has had in his home country. He had a number of fights in the Australian Fighting Championship (AFC), claiming and defending the companies lightweight title along the way.

"I think I've had about half my fights in Australia,



Stipe Miocic (blue shorts) totally outclasses Mark Hunt at UFC Adelaide

GETTY IMAGES



Kurtis Staiti (right) dominated in Thailand

ROB COX

so I'm very used to fighting here. I came up in the Australian scene and I'm very comfortable fighting here," said Hooker.

Here's hoping we can see the exciting Kiwi talent back in Melbourne this November.

'John' Wayne Parr has made a triumphant return from injury, defeating Daniel Kerr via KO in the third round of their bout at Caged Muay Thai (CMT) 6.

At 38 years old and with the most significant injury of his career to take care of — a broken orbital bone at the hands of Toby Smith — Parr spent almost a year out of the fighting game, but he took care

of Kerr in dominant fashion.

"It was time to get back in there before I get into my forties and have to hang up my gloves," Parr told the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. "While I still can, I don't want to regret not doing it...I was put on this earth for one thing and that's to get in there and fight."

CMT is Parr's own fighting promotion, devised to take the best elements from MMA and muay Thai to create a unique and exciting experience for fights and fans alike.

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experience you won't find anywhere else.

Arlene 'Angerfirst' Blencowe, the first Australian female signing to US promotion Bellator MMA, has made a dominant debut on the undercard of Bellator 137.

Blencowe fought veteran Adrianna Jenkins, who took the bout on short notice when Blencowe's first opponent Alexis Dufresne learned she was pregnant.

Blencowe dominated Jenkins, landing constant body shots, before dropping her with a right and landing a bunch of knee strikes to the body. After some unanswered ground-and-pound, the referee ended the fight late in the first round.

At 32 years old, Blencowe made a late transition to MMA, having her first professional fight in April 2013, and with her May win has already amassed a record of 6-4.

She has added three fighters to her professional boxing record during that time also, winning the Women's International Boxing Association (WIBA) World Light Welterweight title and the World Boxing Federation Female Welterweight title.

Her debut Bellator win is an important one for Blencowe as it firms her as a contender in Bellator's recently reintroduced women's featherweight division.

Eighteen-year-old rising Australian star Kurtis Staiti put on a stunning performance on the live televised Max Muay Thai show in Pattaya on 17 May taking a clear points decision win over his Thai opponent Dejsanit Sorsornawat.

Staiti, who fights out of Matrix gym back home in Australia, dominated the fight from the opening bell, shaking up Sorsornawat with some solid punches and elbows and out-working him with hard knees in the clinch. Sorsornawat needed a KO in the final round, but Staiti controlled the ring comfortably to take a clear points win. ■

Robert Whittaker (left) shocks Brad Tavares at UFC Adelaide



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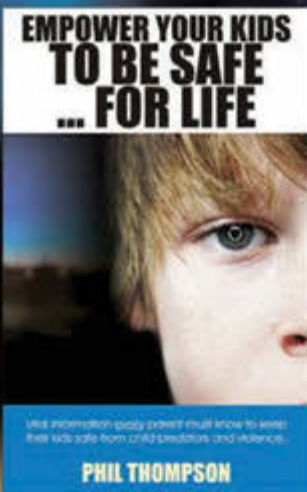
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An interview with Japanese history professor and Bujinkan ninjutsu authority Dr Kacem Zoughari, a direct student of Grandmaster Masaaki Hatsumi

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Seasoned karateka, stunt fighter and bodyguard to Hollywood stars Russ Price on the highs and lows of a martial arts career in the fast lane

Internal Wing Chun

Wing Chun kung fu master and author Sifu Sergio Iadarola gives an insight into his rediscovery of the art's lost 'internal' element

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A former MMA fighter reveals how his exposure to reality-based combat systems changed his opinions on training and the martial arts

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Masters of Goju karate look at the relationship between blocking and striking, and how to bring the two together for devastating effect

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Kali and French *la canne* master Salem Assli gives an insight into the technical brilliance of his homeland's stick-fighting method

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LIVING BUDO WITH DAVID DANGERFIELD



Aiming for the Sky

If you let your imagination run, budo can bring the power of possibility to bear.

For many generations, a small collection of buildings on the edge of a village in Japan had been home to an old *kyudo* (archery) school. Each year the villagers would ask the master of the *ryu* (school) if he would publicly demonstrate his art at the village celebrations. Every year the master would gently decline...but every day the soft thud of arrows striking home would echo beyond the dojo as he practised.

And then came the year when, to everyone's pleasure, the master agreed to demonstrate his *kyudo*.

Early in the morning, his assistants assembled the target in the fields beside the cliff at the edge of the village. Meanwhile, the master strung his massive bow then carefully selected his arrow and arranged his robes. Taking his stance, he nocked the arrow and, breathing deeply, he effortlessly drew the bow to its full extent. There was a moment of silence, then the arrow soared out across the sky.

The villagers watched its progress intently, only to see the arrow sail well above the target and disappear over the cliff. In the stunned silence that followed, the master was heard to joyfully cry out, "Bull's eye!"

When I was in India recently delivering a series of 'Strategic Living' workshops, I kicked off each one by sharing this story. It's always interesting to hear people's interpretations of its meaning. These seminars were for the senior leadership teams from several very large corporations, so we are talking about some very well-educated and experienced people with significant business acumen.

When summarising the thoughts of the participants, we usually arrive at something like 'greatness aims at targets that others do not yet see'.

Among other topics, we go on to review personal, professional and organisational goals in light of this concept. As an example, I talk about some of the targets that Kenshinryu and Compass have hit. Across 15 years, Kenshinryu provided intensive behaviour management and enrichment programmes to over 7,000 youth at risk through local secondary schools — although in 1991 when we started our intervention programmes, people were lining up to tell me that teaching martial arts to young men with serious behaviour issues in schools, and during school hours, was never going to happen. Late last year, Compass took out the Knowledge Industries and Professional Services (large business) gong at the regional business awards, and you can bet no one saw a not-for-profit disability service provider walking away with the key award at such a prestigious business event.

How often do we hear parents berating kids with, 'Stop daydreaming and get back to your homework', or employers voicing similar sentiments to their workers. Perhaps it should be the opposite: 'Take some time out and make sure you do some daydreaming.' When the mind is encouraged and even trained to wander purposefully, it begins to sense and then see what lies otherwise unperceived over the horizon. This act of crafted imagination is the first



A Japanese *kyudo* master in traditional garb

TORU YAMANAKA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

of three ingredients that can combine to produce powerful forces. The second ingredient is 'will'. Will breathes life into the possibility that exists beyond the horizon, and begins to transform it from latency to reality. The final ingredient is 'process' — the daily doing of the small steps; the mindful practice.

With that combination of imagination, will and process, we will glance up one day and the targets that previously sat unseen far over the horizon will 'suddenly' comprise our reality here and now.

As adults (and increasingly as children) we are often consumed with 'important work' and are far too busy to waste time daydreaming. But it's worth considering that there are two types of 'important work'. There's the work that we

do, and then there's the work we do on the person who does the work that we do. Working on that person is vital and the work needs to cover the whole of us, physical, mental and spiritual. And this is where budo can provide a sublime pathway. Practised well, the martial ways foster purposeful imagination (creativity), will power (discipline, perseverance) and a ritual of daily practice (process).

Like the participants in my Strategic Living workshops, we can all benefit from investing time in stretching our senses to feel what is out there waiting for us beyond our personal and professional horizon. It reminds me of a great quote I once read: "Dream like you will live forever, live like you may die tomorrow." ■

David Dangerfield, 6th Dan aikido, is the author of Martial Reflections – In Search of Wisdom. He began training in martial arts in 1974 and today teaches aikido and Shinto Muso Ryu swordsmanship at Kenshinryu, his full-time dojo on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. He is also the founder of the Compass Institute, a charity that provides post-secondary education and training to young people with disabilities using budo principles.

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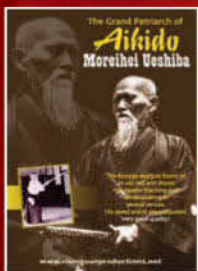
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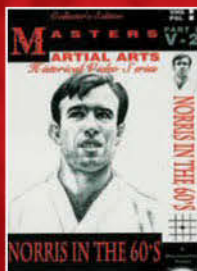
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The Fight is in the Genes

The arguments regularly put forward in support of MMA against its detractors are usually from men — but what of a female fan's feelings on it?

Adelaide has hosted its first UFC event on 10 May amid some predictable 'controversy' in the media by those who find no merit in events like the UFC. Amid this controversy, I thought it insightful to describe the perspective of my wife, someone who is a counsellor and so has a deep understanding of people, but has no training in the martial arts. In her words, she initially found the spectacle of MMA fights "confronting" because with no background in martial arts, she could only take in the surface impression of what she was seeing. And that impression was of two individuals trying to physically damage each other for what appeared to be no good reason other than 'winning' a contest. Left at that, she would definitely have not viewed any more UFC. Yet she is now an avid fan. And the reason for her turnaround? Seeing the deeper aspects.

I started her on that journey by having us watch muay Thai fights and making a point to explain the pre-fight ritual, knowing she had an interest in Buddhism. That opened the door to the understanding that what she was witnessing had deeper significance and meaning for those participating. And that's the first clue as to why the UFC does not appeal to many people. They pass judgment simply based on surface impressions, in the same way I could judge all ball sports, for example, as being spurious, pointless with no functional value.

In watching the shows that lead up to UFC fights, my wife



Frankie Edgar fires on Urijah Faber in their May 2015 UFC bout

DONDITAWATA/GITTY IMAGES

was given insight into the back story, how the fighters train, the time and effort they put in, their ups and downs as people. Many have found the training to be a means of coping with their troubled backgrounds, of channelling their innate aggression into a pursuit that gives them meaning and focus. And here we find more clues.

Fighting is a pursuit that is innate. It is a part of the human experience and part of human evolution. Our biology, particularly in males, drives this. And our biology does not and has not altered at the same rate as human society and technology has changed. The drives that define us as humans that have been with us for many millennia are still there and they need to be channelled, or they will find expression in less than positive ways.

Combat sport is one form of that expression. Joining street gangs and fighting on the streets is another. Provided they have good coaches, combat sportspeople are given the opportunity to channel their innate aggression in more constructive ways and in the process are given the opportunity to grow as individuals. It can turn their lives around. But the detractors don't see this.

They also don't see the primal desire for many of us to 'test' ourselves in what substitutes as a rite of passage — a test that helps us come to understand and accept ourselves through pursuits that involve a degree of risk, sometimes extreme. Participants in combat sports accept and even welcome the

risk as a test of courage in the face of danger.

Many of us possess what is best described as the warrior archetype, meaning someone who is motivated potentially with cost to themselves to make a stand and metaphorically 'fight' for a purpose. My wife has that archetype, although not in the physical sense, and hence the journey of the UFC fighter resonates with her. The UFC's detractors are likely not of that mould; you could lay out all the positives of MMA and cogently argue its relevance and they still will not 'get it'.

The last clue is the concept of the 'shadow' side of humanity. My wife, in doing 'shadow work' with her clients has them come to realise we all have the potential to do dark things. History is replete with examples of whole countries or societies partaking in such acts. As humans we are comprised of both the positive and the potential for the negative. Martial arts offers the opportunity to steer those who could fall prey to such temptations away from that path. Many who are UFC detractors simply deny our shadow side.

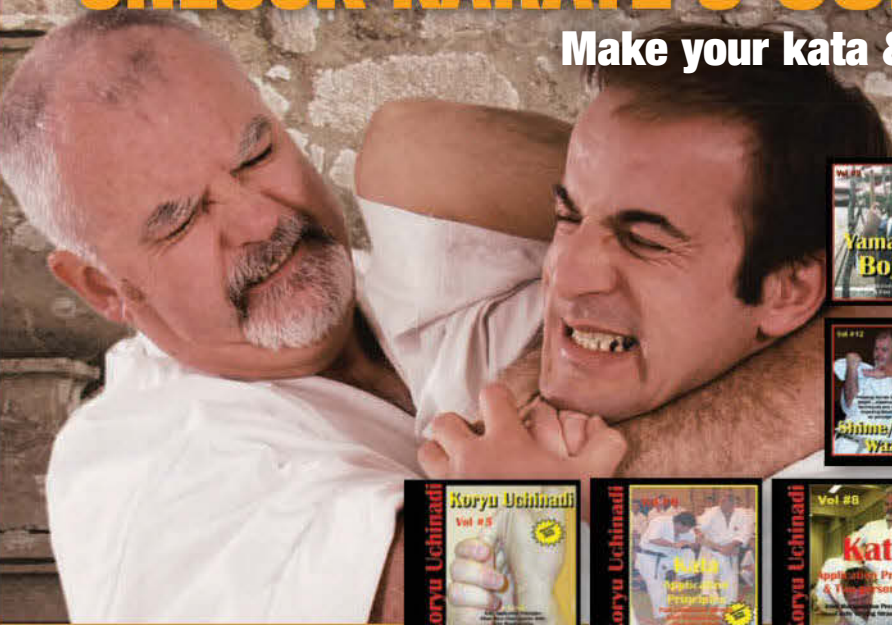
The relevance of all this? It represents our journey through the medium of the systems we train in. Some systems give greater focus to these elements than others but that journey is still there. We need to embrace it so through our training we can grow in a healthy direction. ■

Graham Kuerschner is a 49-year veteran of the martial arts and can be contacted through his website www.sdtactics.com.au

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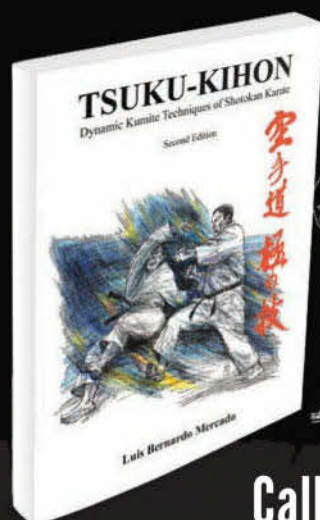


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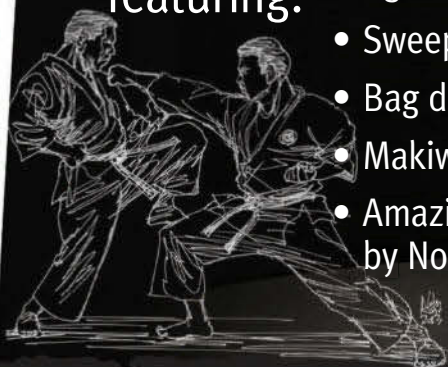
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The Hard Road to Expertise

As the popularity of cross-training proves, there's much to gain from exposure to a wide range of expertise. But how do you recognise — and become — an expert?

As part of my work with the AIS this year, I have been a keynote speaker at the American College of Sports Medicine and worked with our elite in cycling and basketball — areas that at first glance would seem to have nothing to do with my core skills in the martial arts and military. When I worked with the Japanese judo team, I found myself at least in an area of familiarity, but of course the Japanese judo team had no interest in my judo, as Japan is the greatest judo nation in the history of the sport. They were interested in the innovation of the AIS Combat Centre.

The meeting of experts from a range of different areas drives innovation, so looking outside of your own field for ways to improve is key. That's why the Japanese had a great interest in the world-leading developments that the AIS is now applying to the Olympic combat sports. AIS experts in their fields who drove the innovation that, over a decade or so, helped turn Australian cycling from international easy-beats into a cycling powerhouse are now contributing to the combat sports program, too.

Expertise, and the need to share it to advance what we do, is why I again find myself US-bound as I write. As the AIS's world-renowned sports scientist Dr David Martin told me, "You don't need to be a doctor. You are an expert in your field, and expertise is recognised by others who are experts in their fields."

So what makes an expert? I can see expertise in others, but I didn't know why until my mentor and friend Dr Martin gave me a



Expertise in martial arts is now being used to teach AIS cyclists 'crash proofing'

little insight into the answer. As a martial artist who is talking to another martial artist (you), I will use something we both know — the belt grading system — as a metaphor to aid my explanation. For simplicity's sake, I will use the BJJ belt colours.

EXPERT WHITE-BELT

Just like the martial arts, being an expert is a journey in which every destination, once reached, shows itself to be a false peak. Your achievements are real, but there is so much more to come if you stay the course. When you are learning your new craft, you are expected to fail, to fall short along the way. You are new and you will always stumble when learning a new craft. What is called for is perseverance: seven times down, eight times up, as they say.

EXPERT BLUE-BELT

You have your first qualification. You have something that you can hold up to show for your hard work, but remember: all who have come before you have the same, as will all who

come after. This is but the first step in at least 20 years of hard work ahead of you. Whether you have an undergraduate degree, Certificate IV or a blue belt around your waist, there is much more ahead of the apprentice expert.

EXPERT PURPLE-BELT

You are very good at your trade now and you can do well against all that are new to your field. You can now make a living from your skill and at this point you can also be very easily distracted. You can win against your peers, and you might even win in the world championships against other Purple-belts, but always remember: no matter how good you are in relation to your peers, there is always someone coming after your spot. You must keep moving forward, stay focused and not get 'comfortable'.

EXPERT BROWN-BELT

You are now senior in your field. You may be a doctor or a master tradesman but your development still moves forward off the back of the innovation of those who have come before. It is easy now when you deal with most and you can feel like the expert because you can quickly translate the innovation of others into effective and real results for yourself. You can even manipulate that same innovation to give it a look of your own and deceive the layperson of your expertise.

EXPERT BLACK-BELT

You can now recognise all the hard work done by others who came before you. You have come to understand their sacrifices and dedication to their understanding. You realise that when it comes to being a true expert, you are again the beginner. You must now bring something new to the table that helps others in their quest.

Experts by definition maintain their status as experts by driving innovation. After spending so much time with experts from a wide variety of fields, I see that what is common to all is effective, purposeful innovation that makes change for the overall improvement of their field, and also assists other experts in making like improvements in their fields. ■

Sgt (retired) Paul Cale has fought in Afghanistan and until mid-2013 managed the Integrated Combat Centre at 2nd Commando Regiment, where he was in charge of developing CQC for Australian Special Forces. He now leads the combat sports program at the Australian Institute of Sport and runs Cale Integrated Combat (www.facebook.com/caleintegratedcombat)

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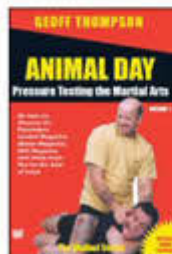
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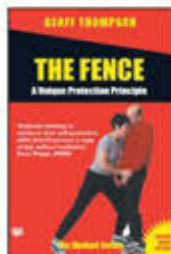
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THE LAST WORD WITH JOHN B WILL



Get Functioning

The term 'functionality' is bandied around a lot these days, but what does it mean, and what does it take to get it?

The world is a very different place than what it was even a decade ago. For many of us, time is now the most valuable resource. The world is simply moving at a faster pace than it did for our parents, or their parents. So what does that mean for the martial arts? For many, it simply means that we want to 'cut to the chase'. We are less willing to spend time on practice that does not give us a solid return. We live in a world where results are expected, so we have less patience for things that do not 'work' or are less effective than promised. In short, we thirst for functionality!

'Functional fitness' was a term unheard of 10 years ago. Sure, different people espoused different fitness protocols then, but times have seen a paradigm shift in terms of how and why people are going about getting 'fitter'. We change, we adapt according to the stresses we are exposed to, so if we stress our cardio system, we become better at just endurance; if we stress our anaerobic system, we become better adapted to short and powerful bursts; if we stress our muscular system, we grow thicker muscle fibres and 'bulk up', etc. But nowadays, more and more people are asking the obvious question: what areas do I want to improve in, and why? What do I want to get in return for my efforts? And in asking these questions, we are led to the concept of functionality.

Functionality is something that I have always looked for in my own martial arts practice. I, like most others of my time,

began my martial arts journey in the traditional arts. After some undesired pressure-testing in real life, I realised that while the training was of some value, I wanted to take a more practical (functional) approach, and so I began my journey in earnest. I headed to South East Asia and immersed myself in silat, dabbled in muay Thai, wrestled in India, trained in Japan and China, etc. By the mid '80s I had caught my first glimpse of *vale tudo* (anything goes) in Brazil and made my way there a few years later to begin my foray into the art of Brazilian jiu-jitsu.

At that time, and for a few years after, I was only interested in those aspects of BJJ that could be brought to bear in 'real-world' fights. My desire for 'functional' martial arts training forced me to address those areas of my training that were severely lacking (the biggest one being groundwork). BJJ, for me, was highly functional, even at the most fundamental level; like in boxing, kickboxing, wrestling and judo, every day I was pressure-tested on the mat. It was a daunting experience, but the reward was well worth the price, and has become increasingly more so over several decades of practice.

Nowadays, the BJJ scene is very different from the one I first encountered in Rio de Janeiro back in 1986. The sporting aspect of BJJ has enjoyed a level of growth that I could never have predicted. I knew I loved it, but I never dreamed that so many others would also! It seems, though, that I am not alone in my search for functionality. I think



'Functional fitness' means the desired ends must dictate the means

CHARLIE SURIANO

this is why BJJ is still enjoying incredible growth; with even a little training, you can expect a very big (and measureable) return on time invested. Same goes, by the way, for an art like boxing; it's highly functional, almost all of the 'fluff' stripped away. Be prepared for a price, though; again, not for everyone.

It is usually difficult to get great returns from undertaking low-risk or low-effort activities. Don't expect exceptional fitness from a nightly walk around the block; don't expect to become independently wealthy by saving \$10 a week; and don't expect to develop exceptional fighting skills practising TKD twice a week. That's not to say these things aren't worthwhile; saving \$10 a week, walking around the

block and doing two classes of TKD each week is infinitely better than doing nothing. But if you want to be functionally fit, expect to sweat hard for it; if you want to be financially independent, expect to make more than a few sacrifices, over more time than you might like, to make it happen; if you want to have functional, street-worthy fighting skills, expect to do the hard yards and live outside of your comfort zone.

There's design on paper and then there is building the house in real life; these are two different things — ask any builder and his counterpart, the architect. Strong functionality requires a meeting of the two, and so it is with our martial arts training. ■

John B Will is head of BJJ Australia and teaches Brazilian jiu-jitsu, shootfighting and self-defence solutions around the world. Check out his regular blog at www.bjj-australia.blogspot.com.au



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